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RECOLLECTIONS OF DOCTOR THOMAS HINDE,

*Who departed this life at Newport, Campbell county, Ky., Sept. 28, 1828,
in the ninety-second year of his age.*

THE writer of this sketch of recollections has been importuned to write the life of his father, the late Dr. Thomas Hinde. But having formerly furnished a short account of his experience, which was published in the Methodist Magazine, under the head of 'Short Sketches of Revivals of Religion in the Western Country,' it was thought that any further notice of this pious and godly man was not now necessary. Upon reflection, however, it was conceived that while subjects are fresh upon the mind, it would be well to gather up some 'fragments' of past recollections, which may be read with some degree of interest, and be profitable to the pious.

[Dr. Hinde was a surgeon in the army of the English general Wolfe.] Among his contemporaries at Quebec, Louisburg, &c, was the celebrated Dr. Meikle, who wrote 'Solitude Sweetened.' We have heard through the medium of orator Phillips's famous speech, of the 'far famed Widow Wilkins!' Her husband was one of the surgeons. Dr. Smollet was there. The very order of Christian people (the Methodists) whom Dr. Hinde, after his singular conversion, had claimed and joined as the most primitive in Christianity,—Dr. Smollet in his day (the days of the ignorance of these people) denounced, in his History of England, as fanatics! 'Many thousands,' says *that doctor*, 'in the lower ranks of life were infected with this species of enthusiasm, [religion I suppose, or what was then called Methodism,] by the unwearied endeavours of a few obscure preachers;—such as Whitefield and the two WESLEYS, who propagated their doctrine to the most remote corners of the British dominions, and found means to lay the whole kingdom under contribution!' These preachers must have been wonderfully obscure to do all this!

Dr. Hinde had seen both George II, and George III;—was a great admirer of Lord Chatham, the *premier* of his day. He was devoted to his king and country, until the commencement of the American revolution; and then, with the distinguished patriot, *Patrick Henry*, took an active part in the American cause,—the

cause of his adopted country. To the latest period of his life, however, he had those ardent feelings which persons will possess, who have taken part in any memorable transaction. He was all life at the very mention of the name of General Wolfe, or the siege of Quebec. He would almost involuntarily rise from his seat, and recapitulate, with astonishing accuracy, the whole history of those memorable days. The persons to whom he was giving his interesting narrative, would almost conceive that the whole transaction was presented to their view :—the movements of the vessels,—the debarkation of the army,—General Wolfe plunging into the water, waist deep ; his ascent to the ‘ heights of Abraham,’ the roar of the small arms, the thunder of the cannon, and the sound of death groans ! He wound up the whole with Wolfe’s expiring words,—his aid standing by, and calling out, ‘ They run ! they run !’ ‘ Who runs ?—who runs ?’ asked the expiring general, with the rattles heard in his throat !—‘ The French, sir ;—they are running ;—they are giving way in all directions !’ Then falling back, having been roused at the sound of his aid’s voice, ‘ I die happy !’ Those scenes were well calculated to make a deep impression on the Doctor’s mind. But from blood and carnage, as he said on some occasions he had amputated, with his colleagues, a cart load of limbs in a day, we will turn to our recollections of other subjects.

Dr. Hinde had the most exalted opinion of General George Washington. From the commencement of his public career until his death, he thought that General Washington was a great, a good, and a virtuous man. Just before he died, he remarked, (from what cause I know not,) ‘ General Washington had been two weeks travelling this road. I shall not be so long : my journey will be rough, but short, and *not painful*. I made no inquiry ; the suggestion to my mind was that his allusion was to his constitution, (having been greatly blessed in that respect,) that although worn down by age, yet having wasted away, not being able to take food, he expected when the system gave way, he should go speedily ; and so it was.

Dr. Hinde embraced religion, and joined the Methodist church, in the year 1788. At that time the writer was nearly or about three years old. Having banished his daughter from his house for going to hear the Methodists preach ; and applied a blister plaster,—Bishop Asbury has stated on her head ;—Theophilus, in the Doctor’s experience, stated on her neck :—both stand corrected by the old lady, who is yet alive, aged eighty-two :—her memory is excellent ;—she says it was a very large plaster, and covered *entirely her whole side*. She is no doubt correct. Rebecca Pentis, then a young lady, now Mrs. Broadus, of Caroline county, Va., was present. I recollect having seen her in 1825. She confirmed the old lady’s statement. Well, be it so. This was done, partly through *ignorance*, and partly through a spirit of persecution. When he applied the blister,* he made the threat, ‘ I will stop you from going to hear these

* To his wife.

Methodists ; they are turning the world upside down, and setting people crazy. You shall not go to hear them ;—you do not look like the same woman ;—your very looks are changed !’ She submitted, bore it patiently ; it was dressed the *next day*. The doctor was stricken under conviction, repented, and turned to God. I can just recollect some of the circumstances. I remember perfectly well the old lady’s starting to meeting after the blister was dressed, and her getting a fall from her horse ; but came home *rejoicing*, and the old man *commenced* praying. This was all strange work to me ! I discovered at once that a mighty change had taken place in the old man. For forty years he told his own doleful tale as an humble penitent, with tears streaming from his eyes ; and like a persecuting Saul of Tarsus, this was his ‘thorn in the flesh,’—that he had persecuted the cause of God, the church of Christ ; and indeed the last assault made by Satan on this devoutly pious man, was in reference to this very act of his life. This *accuser* of the brethren can rise up against the old Doctor no more.

When the Doctor had embraced religion, and joined the Methodist Episcopal Church, his jovial companions at a distance, not having heard of his change, formed a select company to visit him, in order, as was usual, to have great sport, and much amusement. On their arrival, as one expressed it, instead of being entertained with sallies of wit, and with a fund of amusement, as they expected, the company were thunderstruck when they were brought to learn that the Doctor had embraced religion, and had become a *Methodist*. None but those who lived in that period knows with what inexpressible contempt the very name of *Methodist* was sounded in that day. Indeed, after the old people removed to Kentucky, when a schoolboy, my *proud heart* would ache when asked to what religious order my parents belonged,—to say—‘*Methodist*.’ Yet I then believed them the most religious people on earth. However, the Doctor’s company, instead of jokes, anecdotes, and songs, were warmly entertained with exhortations on religion ;—‘Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.’ He exhorted them to repentance, or they would be eternally lost ! Struck with amazement, the company gazed one upon another, and retired.

When I look back to the neighbourhood in which the Doctor embraced religion, in Virginia,—the circle of his friends, the fascinating allurements of the fashionable society, the pleasant disposition of the people, and the many snares and dangers on every hand, it now appears to me as a miracle of mercy that he was so wonderfully sustained in his Christian course. But he had a pious wife, firm in the cause of God, devoted to piety, and of great discretion ; and who even far exceeded her husband in point of usefulness. The Doctor when he first embraced religion was, from his natural temper, disposed to drive. I recollect on one occasion he was attacked, after his conversion, by a Deist, as I presume he was. I heard a tremendous noise in the hall ; ran to see what was the mat-

ter,—when I found the old gentleman, and his former associate, (Malcolm Hart,) a Scotchman, with a table in the middle of the room, the Bible lying open before them; both standing erect, foot to foot, one on each side the table, no other persons in the room, disputing the points in relation to the truth of the Christian religion! Surely, thought I, this is a strange way to settle a question!

A brief description of the Doctor's person, and of his spirit and deportment, may here be added.

The Doctor was, in his formation, of a substantial frame;—of middle size; about five feet three or four inches in height; square shoulders; tolerably large head; a fine square forehead; an aquiline nose; rather full face; black or darkish hair, and had remarkably fine large piercing and penetrating eyes, of a grayish blue. Among his friends his looks spoke all the true benevolence of his soul. The very milk of human kindness rested in his heart. Yet such was his knowledge of human nature, that when introduced to a stranger, as a friend observed not long since, 'The very looks of his eyes asked me the question, Are you an honest man, sir?' His commanding appearance, his solid piety, his deep humility, being the humblest of the humble, made a powerful impression in every company, and among all classes of people. The saints loved him, and the sinners respected him.

In every circle of society, among the high or among the low, among the rich or among the poor, although the Doctor would give frequent vent to his almost overpowering humour and wit, to cheer the spirits of his friends, yet he set his bounds to all these things; and although on all such occasions his friends were cheered by his vivid conversation, and his humorous method of expressing himself, in the end he would give some happy turn to the conversation, and present the shortness of time, death, or eternity, or more generally, heaven,—the blessed state of the righteous after death. But his constant theme was the excellency of religion, as an antidote to all our afflictions, sorrows, losses, crosses, disappointments, and ills of this present life. Indeed, whether writing or giving verbally a prescription to a patient, he uniformly closed with a deep expression of what he himself felt:—religion was recommended, as the 'grand cure for all our maladies.' I in some degree see and feel the force of this expression as it has fallen from my pen.

Humility was a Christian grace to which the Doctor clung with great delight. 'The humble look,' said he, 'of the dog driven out from the room, pierces me to the heart. I envy the dog his humility!' On another occasion he said, that humility appeared to him so great a Christian virtue, that 'it was a sentinel placed over the human heart to guard the grace of God.' That 'when humility was gone, the grace of God took its flight from the human breast.'

When in the society of his friends he acted on his own maxim, 'Freedom among friends is the foundation of friendship.' In his private devotional exercises, the Doctor reminded me very much of

Francis Xavier, the Catholic apostle of the heathen. He would sit for hours absorbed in thought. This was a source of glorious enjoyment to him:—to have his mind wholly called off from all earthly good, and fixed and stayed on God. This was the case for the last fifteen or twenty years of his life. He lost sight of the world:—God, heaven, happiness, and everlasting glory, occupied his whole thoughts. ‘When I can’t go to meeting,’ said he, ‘I must double my diligence in my private devotions!’ His children and his grandchildren have often been melted into tenderness, by hearing the low accents of an aged father or grandfather’s voice, pleading with God in a private room, in a grove, or in some sequestered place, and presenting them individually to a throne of grace by name. This was often the case. When in practice as a surgeon and physician, the Doctor was often called from such retreats by his children or grandchildren. The little grandchildren were familiarized to their grandpapa’s ‘prayer house,’ as they called his retreat. Frequently all knelt together, and the grandfather poured out his soul to God for his rising posterity.

The Doctor often repeated a circumstance which occurred while he resided in the interior of Kentucky. Bishop Asbury called to see him, and spent several days. In the night the Doctor was sent for:—the messenger roused him up, and pleaded hard for him to go to see the sick man.—The night was dark and rainy. The Doctor, being frequently afflicted with the vertigo, was deterred from venturing out, and refused to go. The messenger wept. Bishop Asbury, having been waked up, had listened. He at length, with a distinct voice proceeding from his room, decided the case. ‘Doctor, you must go!’ ‘Good Lord,’ said the Doctor, ‘his words appeared to have been pronounced as from eternity!’ ‘I went, and found a precious brother in the Lord (an exhorter or preacher) in the deepest and severest agony. A few hours more, and he would have been past recovery. I first prayed, and committed his case to God. Then with medical aid used every possible exertion. By morning, as if by a miracle, the man, who the night preceding was grappling with death, with every possible symptom of a speedy dissolution, was now in a fair way for recovery, happy in God, and was soon restored, to the astonishment and joy of his family and friends.—Surely,’ said the Doctor, ‘this was indeed a singular interposition of Divine Providence!’

When the Doctor first embraced religion, it was but a short space of time before he released a tenant from a pretty considerable rent, provided he would keep his house open for preaching and class meeting. His sensitive soul was fully alive to every order of human society. It was here, at *Chalk Level*, he introduced the first *Sunday school* I ever heard of, for the instruction of the slaves. The first Methodist preaching there was at his own house. While he himself was under deep convictions, he prepared the seats. The subject of the preacher was suitable to his own condition, ‘the wilderness

state of the soul.' Having got through, the Doctor's humour, though he was still in deep distress, appeared not to have forsaken him. 'Having gotten through "the wilderness,"' said he, 'let us have a "clearing out." Come, let us remove these seats.'

He was sometimes twitted by his old friends, and at other times by his brother disciples of Æsculapius. One occurrence has been mentioned by a lady, since I wrote the last paragraph; though she knew not that I was sketching these remarks. Her husband was severely afflicted. A council of physicians from Cincinnati was called, to consult on his case. This was in 1811. Several of the aged physicians attended;—Dr. Hinde was sent for. He was called on first for his opinion. The lady sat to listen in an adjoining room. Dr. Hinde, among other things, recommended a blister plaster.—'Doctor,' said old Doctor A——, 'it seems you think very highly of blister plasters. I have understood that you applied a blister to your wife, to stop her from going to church!' The lady remarks, with a 'shout' in the council of doctors, Dr. Hinde replied, 'Glory to God! and a God-blessed blister plaster it was. It brought me to my senses!'

Doctor Hinde was very shrewd in his remarks; a close, rigid, and strict observer of men and things; and remained the same till the day of his death. His remarks were *pithy*, and always to the point. A great deal was expressed in a few words. His expiring moments were rolling on when called on by a fashionable lady:—'Doctor,' said she, 'do you know me?' Pointing to several parts of her apparel, and dying as he was,—'Were it not for these,' said he, 'I should know you better. It is a great thing to know one's self!'

When an active man in his practice, in the interior of Kentucky, and in Virginia, his remarks were often caught with avidity, and became a kind of maxims among the people. He had a most violent antipathy to the distillation of spirituous liquors. The country was filled with his severe philippics on the distillers and retailers of spirits. One said to him, 'Doctor, whiskey is one of the good creatures of God!' 'Of the devil!' replied the Doctor,—'so throw it in the fire, it will burn! and many will burn in hell with it!' He classed the drunkards, the *lazy, lounging*, and the *hardy, or industrious*. The first were soon, he said, burned out; the second became bloated and dropsical; and the third contended with the element of fire, by the *sweat of their brow!* The Doctor studied what he called 'the whole fabric and economy of the human system.' To a friend he said, 'Mr. Ellis, take care of yourself; I know your constitutional attacks; you are in danger of a speedy death.' 'Doctor,' was the reply, 'I never was so hearty in my life.' 'For that very reason,' remarked the Doctor, 'you are in danger:—life *ebbs and flows*;—you are at high tide; you want depleting;—your system must soon sustain a severe shock.' In about two weeks Mr. Ellis was in eternity.

The Doctor contended that human life and human affairs were governed pretty much by septennial periods. That there was a struggle of life every seven years ; and if we attend to the lists of deaths and ages in the bills of mortality, that it would go far to establish the fact, and probably we would find it so :—that the age of sixty-three was the grand *climacteric*. If we passed this period, we advanced to what he called the *whittleather* state, and perhaps after this glide down to a good old or advanced stage of life.

Doctor Hinde had studied physiognomy, and carried his principles to an amazing length. Towards the preachers he always manifested the most unbounded tenderness of soul. He met them as they dismounted, with tears flowing down his cheeks, and his arms expanded to embrace them. He could not carry on a religious conversation without giving vent to his feelings with repeated bursts of ‘Glory.’ It always went like an electric shock ;—his features lightened, and his countenance beamed with light ;—his face would become flushed, and his rapturous expressions were such as melted down into tenderness the most hardened and impenitent. Towards the *old preachers*, who had ‘borne the burden in the heat of the day,’ he felt unusual sensations. ‘I never see brother S——,’ said he to me, ‘but it sets all my soul on fire.’

The Doctor’s affection for children was unusually great. Babes appeared to catch his sympathy of soul. In company or in meetings, these little sucklings would leave their mothers’ arms, and fly to the Doctor’s embraces. He said they reminded him of the angels of God. Passing a school room where there was a female teacher, in the neighbouring city, he got a glance in the evening of the pious schoolmistress on her knees ; the little children around all on their knees also, at prayer. It electrified the Doctor to such a degree, that he raised such a ‘shout of glory,’ that the people came running together, to see, as they conceived, a ‘crazy man !’

The schisms in the church affected his mind. He had felt and seen the effects of Mr. James O’Kelly’s unhappy breach. ‘Yet,’ said the Doctor, ‘God overrules all these things. But there is nothing like spiritual preaching ;—this melts down every thing before it.—These schisms or divisions seem at first to cast a cloud over us. Yet the faithful are driven closer to God ; and are more and more united, and rooted and grounded in grace. And these will rise and flourish under *spiritual* preaching. But,’ said he, ‘there are many Nicodemuses in the world. As it was formerly, it is so now,—“How can these things be ?”—They are unacquainted with the new birth.’—When placed in the congregation, the Doctor always sought for a seat where he could see the preacher. ‘When,’ said he, ‘I see his cheeks redden, and feel from his voice that he has the worth of souls at heart, I catch the sacred flame.’ His voice, often responding a hearty ‘amen,’ will long be remembered by all who knew him. In respect to gifts, as well as the graces of the Spirit, the Doctor often remarked, ‘that where we take a delight, we make an improve-

ment. That God, in calling men to the ministry, when he called, also qualified.'

In his declining years his constant theme was the writings of Paul. He delighted in the epistles of that apostle. The seventh and eighth chapters of Romans he would have read, if he could, several times a day. Also the fourteenth and fifteenth chapters of the gospel by St. John. He carried the '*Christian's Pattern*' in his pocket, and said he tried to carry it in his *heart*. This little book was in his pocket till a short time before his death; when he presented it to a lady, and said, '*Read it, and be a Christian.*'

The only struggle, as to the things of this life, with the old Doctor when he came to die, was the leaving behind his aged companion, to whom he had been wedded sixty-one years. '*O my dear,*' he would often say, '*come and go with me; let us both go to glory together.*' He was admonished, as he conceived, by a view of a daughter, as a messenger from the upper world, that he would shortly go hence, and that she would escort him to glory.

The writer returned home one week before this venerable servant of God took his last farewell of his family and friends. His prayer was heard in seeing both his sons before his death. On Sunday morning, 28th September, 1828, at about ten o'clock, this faithful servant of God began to take his final departure. Holy angels appeared to hover round his bed. '*These views,*' said he, '*are glorious.*' He was perfectly rational. The sacred flame had burned steadily in his breast for forty years;—the solemn and glorious period now had arrived;—that period, to prepare to meet which he had endeavoured to make the sole business of his life. With childlike humility he had borne his afflictions. Constantly in a devotional frame of mind, we still occasionally heard from him bursts of '*glory to God.*' '*O for a heart to praise my God.*' '*Come, ye that love the Lord,*' &c. At half past ten o'clock his happy soul took its flight from the tenement of clay, to renew its theme of '*glory*' in the world of everlasting deliverance;—and there to shout the praise of God through ETERNITY! Amen.

MEMOIR OF THE LATE REV. BISHOP GEORGE.

Continued from page 16.

[BIOGRAPHICAL memoirs of great and good men, besides being a just and merited tribute of respect to their virtues, serve to illustrate the grace of God in the dispensations of his providence and mercy towards his creatures, and also the economy of the church or community within whose system of operations their talents have been rendered available in the cause of humanity and religion.

In that part of the sketch of Bishop George's life already published, the two principal events, and perhaps the only ones which claim particular notice at this time, are his conversion and his call to the ministry. Even these might be passed over in silence, were

It is certain that this narrative would fall into the hands of none but those who are conversant with the spirit and economy of Methodism. There are many, however, who, though furnished with 'points of observation sufficiently numerous to enable unprejudiced persons to form an accurate estimate of its character and influence,' are nevertheless as ignorant of its peculiarities, to all appearance, as though it had no existence. Such persons, when they read accounts of men who have become distinguished for their popularity or permanent usefulness as Christian ministers, and observe their rapid progress from obscure circles, through the ordeal of their awakening, conversion, and preliminary religious exercises, into the field of enlarged and successful usefulness, sometimes in the brief course of a few years, are apt to think there is something extraordinary, if not miraculous, in it. They speak of such cases in the language of wonder and admiration, with evident signs of an inward impression that they are to be regarded as rare interpositions of Providence, in raising up distinguished individuals for particular and extraordinary purposes. But in Methodism, which is certainly peculiar in its institutions, these are ordinary events. The great body of Christians who have been brought to the knowledge of God through the instrumentality of Methodist preaching, will trace in the narrative of Bishop George, a plain account of Christian experience, answering, in all essential points, to their own; nor will ministers, who have been brought into the work through the same medium, less clearly discover the conflicts of feeling and the emotions of heart through which they themselves have passed, in entering the field of their labours. Thus far, then, we see nothing particularly to distinguish the subject of this memoir from other Methodist preachers, either in his conversion, or his call to the ministry. Both show the hand of God as it is revealed, not in a few individual cases only, but in the entire and grand system of operations by which he has distinguished that great and growing revival of religion extensively known and felt in both hemispheres, as well in furnishing an evangelical ministry to carry it on, as in rendering that ministry efficacious.

Of the dealings of God with him up to the time of his entering into the ministry, it was fit and proper that Bishop George should be left to speak, principally, himself. Henceforward, we shall have to view him 'more abundant' in labours, in sufferings, and in sacrifices; all which, together with his qualifications for his high and holy calling, and the spirit and manner in which he discharged the weighty and responsible duties of his office, will present subjects of occasional remark.

We left him just entering, formally, into the itinerant field, with his eye fixed upon 'the vigilant Wesley, Coke, and Asbury,' whom he had judiciously selected as examples for imitation, and as models whom it should be his aim to follow, as they followed Christ.—Imbued with the same spirit, and having in view the same end,

he acted on the axiom that nothing is to be considered as done while there remains any thing to be done; and, animated with a holy ardour for the salvation of sinners, we find him next in his newly appointed field of labours, of which he speaks as follows:]

Having reached Caswell circuit, the place to which I was appointed, I found the same 'faith, hope, and charity,' as when I was converted; and animated by my 'first love,' I was filled with joy and gladness in the work of the ministry. I no longer felt as an alien and a stranger, but as a fellow citizen in the land of my birth, and among the friends and companions of my boyhood. Here, for a few weeks, my soul swam in streams of living pleasure. *Now*, we felt

'The o'erwhelming power of saving grace;—

then, the Divine Spirit, in watering the seed that had been sown, in confirming and strengthening them that had believed,

'Deign'd his influence to infuse,
Secret, refreshing, as the silent dews.'

[Happy as his situation was in this circuit, he was destined, it appears, to enjoy it but a short time. The itinerant plan of regularly and systematically furnishing the gospel to all places where congregations can be collected and societies raised, possesses, undoubtedly, both advantages and disadvantages. Among its advantages may be reckoned a constant and regular supply of the means of grace to all the societies, whether rich or poor,—an extension of the gospel to those places where they are willing to receive it, but, apart from such a plan, are unable to support it,—a distribution of the variety of talents in the ministry, in different places, as occasion may from time to time require, so as to render all subservient to the grand object of promoting the Redeemer's kingdom,—and, what is not by any means the least, a protection against those unhappy difficulties which often occur in churches and congregations on settling a minister, or dismissing one with whom they do not happen to be pleased. These, and many others, experience demonstrates to be permanent and important advantages in disseminating the gospel, and spreading evangelical holiness in the earth. It is believed, moreover, to be in accordance with the commission to go into all the world, or, as it is expressed in a parable, to go out into the hedges and highways, inviting all to the gospel feast.

Among the disadvantages, some have urged the circumstance that this plan does not give the people the privilege of choosing their own ministers. This, however, if judiciously and calmly examined in all its bearings, will be considered, it is believed, more imaginary than real. It would seem, doubtless, to be a gratification to any individual to have his choice in a matter of this kind. But on what plan can *all* really have it? The same church and congregation, having the means to command the best talents, may, and often do, differ in their choice of a minister, in which case the

minority must be denied the gratification of their wishes, and that without a prospect of relief. But, besides this, were we to suppose a minister possessed of the rare talents to suit *all*, he cannot *serve* all. His regular services are limited to one congregation only, while all others, even those who may be equally wealthy, are denied their choice of *him*, however united we may suppose them to be, in wishing to have him. Beyond this the difficulties of a regularly settled ministry, in respect of which the notion is entertained that the people choose their ministers, multiply and increase. The poorer congregations, which are most numerous, and often most need the services of the best preachers, are always subject to have their pastors, in whom they are best united, called from them by the richer ones; or they are liable to be outbid by the richer ones, when, in calling a minister, their choice falls on one who is seeking a settlement. The idea, then, that the itinerant plan is calculated to operate more extensively against the choice of the people, in regard to their preachers, will be found, on examination, to be fallacious. Absolute choice is a privilege, which, in reality, can be guaranteed by no system; and the want of it cannot therefore be urged against the itinerant plan, even as a comparative objection, unless it can be made to appear that the practical operation of the economy renders the evil more extensively felt. The reverse, however, is believed to be the fact. When it is considered that the class of preachers to be employed are first recommended by the laity, as suitable for the work of the ministry, and, therefore, none can be sent to any place except such as are first thus recommended, to have them distributed throughout the whole work, and frequently changed as occasion may require, possesses the advantage of giving to all, rich and poor, a share in the talents of the ministry, and of furnishing a variety for the edification of all.

If there be any thing to complain of in this plan, it is its inevitable tendency to affect the personal interests and comforts of the preachers, beyond what their best friends can imagine. In this respect it may be truly said that they are not their own. To be ready at all times to take the work assigned them,—to continue in their specified field only so long as shall be judged most for the benefit of the cause,—and, then, at a moment's warning, to remove with family and effects to another, and perhaps a distant, poor, and perilous region, are liabilities to which few men would subject themselves without a strong conviction of the importance and utility of the system.

To carry this plan into effect, it is perceived that the power of making the appointments must be lodged somewhere. Leave it with the preachers to choose for themselves, and many might select one place, while others would be neglected. Leave it with the people to choose their preachers, and many places might fix on the same man, whom they could not all have. But submitted as it is, to those whose labours and privations are necessarily superabundant,

and who can have no possible motive other than to supply the work in the best way, after hearing and weighing the claims of both preachers and people, it is rendered practicable, and, as must be evident to all impartial observers, productive of the best results.

We have been the more particular on this point, as efforts have been made to represent that the appointing power of our bishops is an infraction of the rights of the *people*; and that the *preachers*, who patiently sustain the sacrifices and inconveniencies of the itinerant system, are not only minions of this power, but so deeply interested in supporting and extending it, that they cannot be induced to listen to any proposal for restricting its operation. Those who can look at this subject, and work themselves up into a conceit that the people suffer by the power which this economy places in the hands of the bishops, and that the preachers have motives, apart from the prosperity of the cause and the benefit of the people, to continue the system as it is, must be left to enjoy their opinion;—reason can have no influence with them: and we are happy to know that the system is one to which our people have always cordially given the stamp of their hearty approval.

The subject of this memoir was early called, as all other travelling preachers are, to witness the effect of this economy upon his private interests. The precise length of time that he continued on Caswell circuit, we have not the means to know. It appears, however, that within a 'few weeks' after he commenced his services among that happy people, he was directed to another place, presenting to his mind many serious and perilous difficulties. These are best described in his own language, which is as follows:]

I soon heard that Pamlico circuit, extending from Pamlico to Roanoke sound, and embracing as sickly a region as any in North Carolina, was to be the sphere of my labour. This sudden transition from the foot of the Black mountain to the margin of the sea, tried my faith; especially when I was chilled by agues, burnt by fevers, and, in sickness or health, beclouded by moschettoes. Here I laboured until my friends had to assist me in mounting and dismounting my horse. Thus I was made partaker in the afflictions of my brethren. My friends advised me to spend a few weeks in a more congenial climate, that my health might be restored; and in a short time, 'by the good hand of my God upon me,' I was able to travel my circuit. We had some gracious visitations; and when our members professed the knowledge of salvation by the remission of sins, the horrid monster persecution reared his head, and vented his rage.

[It might be deemed irrelevant, perhaps, extensively to notice in this place the persecutions with which Methodist preachers have ever been beset from various quarters, and, in some instances, from those whose profession and standing in the community ought, in all reason, to have been security for a different line of conduct. It consists more with the object of this memoir to keep in view the

conduct of the servant of the Lord, whose life it is intended to portray, and to mark the attributes of his mind, his candour, and his patient forbearance in such a time of trial. All these were exemplified in lovely colours during the event above alluded to. There is an aptness in many people to arraign and impugn a whole community of any given name or order, for any misconduct they happen to witness in an individual of that community. This passion for indiscriminate obloquy, the fruitful source of endless animosities and feuds, has an extensive sway, unreasonable and unjust as it is, in the breasts of even those who make large claims for their liberality and candour. It is admitted, indeed, that in the public acts of any associated community, or for a systematic and uniform course of conduct carried on by their leading men, and not denounced or complained of by those associated with them, the credit of that community is, in the nature of things, more or less implicated. But it is equally unjust and uncandid to reproach any community on account of the evil conduct of an individual who may have obtruded himself into it, or to exempt such a one from the rebuke which his faults merit because of his connexion with a virtuous and worthy people.

The following paragraph will show that Mr. George possessed in a high degree the spirit of a peace maker, and that, being reviled, he reviled not again, but patiently endured, as seeing him that is invisible. Besides this, when taken in connexion with another passage in his memoir, already published, it exhibits, in a strong light, the permanent place which the sentiments above advanced held in his mind. He there speaks of a clergyman by name, whom he denominates an 'excellent minister of Jesus Christ,'—'a servant of the most high God,'—lifting up his 'warning voice,' and 'labouring to promote pure and undefiled religion.' In this section he alludes to one of the same order, but who, because of a different course of conduct, merited, in truth and justice, a different kind of notice. He introduces him as author of the persecution alluded to, thus :—]

A minister stirred up his vestrymen and friends to expel the Methodists from an old church, in which they had worshipped God. To accomplish their design, a number of gentlemen (so called) placed themselves within the altar, armed with heavy bludgeons, and their leader stood behind me in a window; and when the service commenced, he ordered us to depart, as we were dissenters from the church. An old man who was zealous for Methodism, arose and commanded silence, saying that 'in the days of our Lord men would not believe on Him, though he cast out devils, and did many marvellous works.' The persecutor replied, 'Let that man cast out devils, and I will believe in him.' The champion of Methodism replied to this, with some severity, 'Sit down and listen to the word of the Lord, and it may be he will cast *many* out of *you*.' By this time I perceived they were prepared for carnal warfare, and for the sake of peace I begged my friends to follow me, and we

retired and finished our service under the canopy of heaven. These things which happened unto us fell out rather to the furtherance of the gospel; and the bitter envying and strife in the minister, received its reward. Religion spread, and the enemy possessed his church without a congregation. Thus he and his were filled with their own ways.

My next station was Roanoke circuit. Here I enjoyed health and happiness; but these comforts were alloyed by the general lowness in religion among the people. To a man whose heart is in his work this must be exceedingly painful. It occasions no common distress to think that he spends his time for nought, and his labour for that which profiteth not,—that he lives upon the bounty of the church,—perhaps the charity of the poor,—and still accomplishes nothing.

[This appointment does not appear on the minutes, but was filled, probably, by some temporary arrangement, between the conferences of 1790, when he was regularly appointed to Pamlico circuit, and 1791, when his name stands on the minutes for Caswell.]

Caswell was the next scene [1791] of my itinerant labours. My companion in this field was the great and good Henry Hill, said by Mr. Asbury, and many others, to have been the evening star of that period in Methodism. He had been intended for the bar, and had nearly completed his professional education, when God laid in his claim, and sent him to call sinners to repentance, and perfect his saints. He was a star in God's right hand, to illuminate the churches. In season, out of season, to all men, of all ranks, he diffused the light and influence of evangelical truth. It was my privilege to spend one year with him, and it proved the happiest I ever enjoyed. The zeal of the Lord's house animated his heart, and in every society a flame was kindled which 'many waters could not quench.' We finished our labours on this circuit with pleasure and success. Here a friendship commenced between us which was not 'quickly broken,' and which I hope will be perpetuated in eternity.

The place next allotted to me [1792] was Guilford circuit. Here it pleased 'the Head of the church' to revive his work gloriously. It was attended with noise and extravagance of various kinds, which so wounded me that I often left the meetings which it was my duty to superintend. I was tempted to believe the noise hypocrisy. Finding the injury I sustained under such feelings, I returned to the Lord 'with strong crying and tears,' solemnly vowing to let them stand or fall to their own Master,—but I would 'follow the Lord fully.' Our labours were honored with an increase of numbers, and we encouraged ourselves in the Lord our God.

[The great revivals of religion with which our country has been favoured, among both Methodists and others, have been attended with scenes like the one here described, which have been violently denounced by some, and ardently vindicated by others. It is not

necessary to express an opinion respecting them here. It may be a little singular to some, however, that a man of Bishop George's ardent religious feelings, should declare himself so offended at the scenes he witnessed, as often to leave his post, especially when it is recollected in what terms he has elsewhere spoken of the revival during which he was awakened and converted, not dissimilar, in some of its prominent features, from the one here mentioned. The truth appears to have been this, that though a man of ardent feelings, and always pleased to witness a religious excitement among the people, accompanied with suitable indications of the genuineness of the work, he was possessed of too sound a mind to undertake an indiscriminate defence of every thing that might occur during its progress. There were evidently peculiarities in the exercises he witnessed, which he calls *extravagances*. These, in the estimation of some, would have been sufficient to justify an unqualified denunciation of the whole work, while others of the same religious temperament as that of Bishop George, but with less judgment, might have contended that the whole, without exception, was the work of the Spirit; and have hastily condemned any who should have dared to question it, as formalists and persecutors. But Bishop George was incapable, even at that early age, of either of these extremes. While, on the one hand, his good sense dictated to him the possibility of the existence of tares with the wheat, and certain peculiarities in the conduct of the 'shouters' had well nigh driven him to close with a 'temptation' that they were 'hypocrites,' which for a time he found to be exceedingly troublesome to his own peace, on the other, his religious candour would not permit him, as many do, precipitately to pronounce all those hypocrites and deceivers, whose views or feelings did not happen to accord, in every respect, with his own. In the spirit of true piety, therefore, he made it a matter of prayer, that he himself might be preserved 'blameless,' and wisely determined that he would leave others 'to stand or fall to their own Master.' From the following paragraph it appears that the period here spoken of was full of events calculated to test the faith of a young minister, as he then was. He proceeds in his remarks upon these events, thus:—]

In this year the first and memorable General Conference was held, at which Mr. O'Kelly and his confederates laid the foundation of a schism in our church. My presiding elder, Isaac Lowe, was afflicted, and I went in his stead. The zeal and talents of the members were called forth to decide whether the bishop or the annual conferences should appoint the preachers their sphere of labour; for the check on the bishop's power, proposed by Mr. O'Kelly, was, that any preacher who might be dissatisfied with the bishop's appointment, should have an appeal to the annual conference of which he was a member, and they should have the right of altering it. This principle was considered inadmissible, as, 1. It would allow the preachers to fix their own stations, and make

the bishop their secretary. 2. It would disturb the peace of the annual conferences. 3. It would destroy the itinerancy: for if the preachers chose their stations, the people should choose their preachers. On the other side it was contended, that no man ought to have such power, without some control over the exercise of it. But after a discussion of some days, the majority left the power with the bishop. This so chagrined Mr. O'Kelly, who had thought, by the passing of this resolution, to settle himself for life in the most delightful part of Virginia, that he sent his resignation to the conference. This even his friends thought premature and imprudent: but he had raised a hurricane, and he would 'mount the whirlwind and direct the storm.' He found himself, however, surrounded by such stormy spirits, who all contended for the mastery, each one adhering with the tenacious grasp of a falcon to his own opinions, that he could not fix upon any plan of government.

The schism thus made was among the most painful things that occurred during my itinerancy. Mr. O'Kelly had been a father in Israel among preachers and people; his division was in the vicinity of my relations, many of whom joined him; but I disliked their principles and practice. And little as I then knew of the science of government, I was persuaded that Mr. O'Kelly's course would lead to universal anarchy. But I had 'sorrow upon sorrow.' The schismatics had made 'hard speeches,' concerning Mr. Asbury and his friends, and called them by the odious names the Protestants had given to the Papists. This called for patience;—but, after having suffered awhile, we were established.

[All who had the pleasure of an acquaintance with Bishop George, know that he was eminently possessed of a mollient spirit, and exercised largely that charity which thinketh no evil. He was incapable of exaggerating the conduct of an offending brother, or even a mistaken enemy, for the unworthy purpose of loading his reputation with disgrace. But his feelings in respect to any thing which had a tendency to wound the cause of Christ, and retard the progress of religion, were exquisitely tender. On this point few men were susceptible of a higher degree of excitement. Over such scenes of desolation he would mourn day and night; rebuking the spirit of faction wherever he saw it, and warning the unwary against being led away by its insidious influence.

It is due to the memory of this worthy servant of Christ to say, that the remarks contained in the foregoing paragraph originated in the tender regard he entertained for the cause of religion, which he saw mangled and bleeding at every pore, from the wounds which Mr. O'Kelly and his confederates had unfeelingly inflicted upon it, and not in any personal enmity towards them.

That the reader may be satisfied of this, it may be proper to enter more extensively into the subject of Mr. O'Kelly's schism, than would otherwise appear consistent with a memoir of this kind. It is true that the course which Mr. O'Kelly pursued appeared to

Mr. George, who was then but a young minister, as it did to many others, to lead to universal anarchy; yet it does not appear that he complained of either his bringing his resolution into General Conference, or declining any longer to travel under the regulations of the church, when he failed to procure an adoption of the plan which his fancy had generated; but of his 'bitter envying and strife,' before which the spirit of piety fled and disappeared. It is admitted that he considered the course of conduct pursued by Mr. O'Kelly as containing evidence in itself that he was actuated by an ambition to place himself at the head of a party; and, for the purpose of drawing followers after him, exerted all his influence to disaffect the feelings of the people towards the church in which they were nurtured, and the preachers who were labouring in the spirit of meekness for their salvation. To be able to determine with precision how far he was authorized to censure Mr. O'Kelly's conduct as improper, would require a particular knowledge of the events which were spread before him. Without attempting, however, to furnish means for so plenary a decision on the case, enough may be gleaned from the broken history of that schism to satisfy the candid reader that Bishop George's remarks in reference to it were calm and gentle compared with the circumstances which gave rise to them.

A brief account of Mr. O'Kelly's secession may be seen in the *Life of the late Rev. Mr. Garrettson* by Dr. Bangs, recently published, and which we recommend to the reader's attention; but a more ample knowledge of the whole affair may be obtained from two pamphlets published on that occasion by the Rev. Nicholas Snethen, in which the subject was stated so clearly, and the writer's positions supported by evidence so satisfactory, that they had the effect to check in a good degree the desolating spirit of disaffection and strife.

All agree that Mr. O'Kelly was useful during his first labours as a travelling preacher; and he acquired a very considerable share of popularity among the people. But his popularity ultimately proved an injury to him. Symptoms of spiritual decline, connected with indications of an aspiring self importance, were developed in various ways in his conduct for a considerable length of time before he withdrew from the church.

Of his standing and influence Mr. Snethen says, 'Many circumstances conspired to favor his popularity. Indulged by the superintendent, his station was more permanent than any other preacher's. Forward on all occasions to assert his own consequence,—naturally sanguine in his temper, and all glowing with a zeal for the "unparalleled Methodism," he was as a chief among the young preachers; nor had he less influence over the people, whose passions were generally susceptible and exquisite.'

About this time the plan of a council was fixed on for the purpose of consolidating the union, and giving energy to the itinerant

system. Mr. O'Kelly was in favour of the plan, and a member of the council; but on its meeting and proceeding to business, he discovered a spirit of dissatisfaction, and became ultimately opposed to its operations. Whether this opposition was occasioned by his perceiving that the plan of a council was not likely to favor the innovation which he appears to have been meditating, or, as some suppose, by the circumstance of a manuscript being rejected which he presented for examination, is not quite certain. It is evident, however, that he entertained at that time subtle prejudices against that part of the itinerant plan which rendered him liable to be removed to a section of the work less pleasant than the one he occupied, without giving him the advantage of the influence he supposed himself to possess in an appeal from the bishop's appointment. As the main body of the preachers, conceiving that the adoption of such a principle would materially weaken, or wholly destroy their itinerant operations, manifested a disposition not to admit of the change it proposed, he became violent in his complaints against the proceedings of the council-men, holding Bishop Asbury up to view as the prime mover of all that did not happen to please him.

Of his state of mind and course of conduct after the sitting of the council, a pretty correct idea may be obtained from the letters of a preacher who was intimate with him. He says, 'The minutes of the council, and circular of Mr. O'Kelly, came into the district before his return. The minutes informed me that he had consented to every thing;—his circular letter reprobated every thing. I thought it strange; but when I saw him I was more surprised than ever. The very worst thing he could say of the bishop and council seemed to him too good. I observed to him that I feared such proceedings would end in division. He would instantly break out in his overbearing language and manner, and say, he never saw such a parcel of men as our young preachers in his life.——His company was truly distressing. If he were not sighing and groaning, he was venting his bitter reflections against Mr. Asbury, or complaining of his power.' About this time he began to plead for a General Conference of all the preachers; and resolved that whatever a General Conference might determine upon, he would submit to.

In shaping his course for a General Conference, hoping probably that it would afford a better chance for the accomplishment of his purpose than the council, 'he took pains to convince the preachers that they ought to make a powerful effort.' He made a proposition to have the whole district break off at once, and engaged some of the young preachers to circulate a covenant for that purpose. When he could not succeed in that, 'he insisted that the preachers should tell those things to the people, and enter into engagements with them never to receive those preachers who had submitted to the council.'

While he was engaged in these inflammatory measures among

the preachers and people of his charge, and exciting a spirit of jealousy against the economy of the church and the administration of Mr. Asbury, he made an effort also to secure the favorable regards of Dr. Coke, that in the event of a General Conference he might be the more certain of success in his plans. Hence it is evident that he was not forming his calculations on a small scale.

His manner of writing to Dr. Coke seems almost essential to the attainment of a correct knowledge of the dissimulation, I will venture to call it, which he was capable of employing, to throw the ranks of Methodism into confusion, by undermining Bishop Asbury's influence, and reproaching the measures which he and others were pursuing for its success and permanency; and all this in the language of the most humble sycophant, and in a tone expressive of the most alarming fears and deep concern for the 'blessed Methodist church.' How deeply he really regarded its interests will appear in the sequel. His language to Dr. Coke is, 'Write, my dear brother,—teach me, reprove me, press me to my duty.—*** I sit with pleasure at your feet; a privilege I should be happy if I could enjoy. Success to Methodism in the name of the Lord, and God Almighty preserve our dear Doctor, amen! Our bishop [Asbury] has rejected us,—especially me!—declared it before the conference that we are out of the union;—broke up in a distressing manner. He has obtained a great majority, but not fairly. Denied an appeal of a General Conference before you. Grace, mercy, and peace be multiplied to thy dear redeemed soul. This moment I bless God I ever saw your face in the fair fields of America. You are to superintend the blessed Methodist church in England, and I hope also in America. God forbid you should in the least give up your authority here. No, my dear, we few old side Methodists rejoice at hearing your power under God.'—This power under God, however, was the thing his soul hated, and to weaken and destroy which he was then shaping his course.

Thus prepared in every way he could devise for an attack upon episcopacy, he came to the General Conference of 1792, and introduced the resolution of which mention is made by Bishop George in his narrative. The whole affair may be best stated in Mr. Snetten's own nervous language, thus:—'In the first place, Mr. O'Kelly begins to quarrel with the council, and compasses sea and land to make one proselyte;—he gains Dr. Coke, and a number of preachers, to join him, to request a General Conference;—the request is granted;—when the General Conference organizes itself,—it knows no man after the flesh,—it proceeds to make rules to consolidate the union, and to give energy to the itinerant plan. Mr. O'Kelly finds himself only one among so many;—the majority will govern;—he cannot make them see out of his eyes;—he leaves the Conference, exclaiming, "Dort! Dort!" and writes 'to the synod, a mournful farewell.' He calls together his fraternity, in a conference at Piney Grove;—they unanimously condemn the epis-

copal government, but desire union with the people.' Here probably was an end of their rejoicing, as 'old side Methodists,' in the '*power*' which Dr. Coke held under God, as henceforward they are loud and bitter in denouncing episcopal power generally, as 'unscriptural, oppressive, and pernicious to the interests of religion.' Mr. O'Kelly says, 'A separation, or slavish subjection, was unavoidable.' This accords rather poorly with rejoicing to sit at the bishop's feet ; to be pressed to duty, &c. What is man !

As the rejection of Mr. O'Kelly's resolution was made a rallying point by the 'reformers,' who ineptly represented it as the passing of a law that an injured brother should have no redress, and held it up to public odium as fraught with the spirit of despotism, it may be worth while to inquire whether there was any thing in it to excuse or palliate the course of conduct for which it was constantly appealed to as an ample justification. The reader is to bear in mind by the way, that the General Conference passed no law on the subject. Mr. O'Kelly brought in a resolution, in order, if possible, to have a law made to change the existing economy of the church ; and it was the *rejection* of his motion, by a large majority of the Conference, which he calls the making of a law in an hour of "papal darkness." The effect of an adoption of his resolution, the rejection of which was so clamorously denounced as evidence of popery and oppression, Mr. Snethen has sketched in a few words, which will assign the reader a satisfactory reason why so large a majority voted against it, without reducing him to the alternative of supposing that their mental faculties were obscured by a spell of papal darkness. 'In what a ludicrous light,' he says, 'would the appeal have placed the bishop and the conferences ! A preacher has an appointment, and *thinks* himself injured. Brethren, says he, I *think* the bishop has injured me in giving me this station. Very well, brother, if you *think* so, you need not go ; the bishop shall send another in your room. The bishop is obliged to appoint another, perhaps one that has already received his station, and is well satisfied with it : *he* not only thinks himself injured, but is likewise *really* injured, if he be forced to give up his station to satisfy the caprice of [another.] How can a preacher know whether his appointment will be an injury to him, before he makes the trial ? And how can the conference know, when probably two thirds of them may not only be ignorant of the station, but also of the preacher ?' These we may say are only a few of the evils which the preachers saw must arise out of an adoption of Mr. O'Kelly's plan, and therefore they rejected it. On the other hand, they perceived that, as all the appointments were to be supplied, and all the preachers to be furnished with labour, and repeatedly changed, in order to provide for changing one preacher who might complain of having a poor circuit, to one which was esteemed better, it would be necessary to reverse the condition of some other preacher, and give him the poorer instead of the better circuit ; so that the exer-

cise of the bishop's power, which was made a subject of such fearful aspect, was only imaginary when viewed in reference to the rights and privileges of all the preachers taken together : and more especially so in reference to the interests of the people. Still, however, if Mr. O'Kelly, or any other brother, thought he saw evils in leaving the appointing power with the bishop, it was perfectly consistent that he should make an effort in an orderly way to have it differently disposed of. Had he done no more than this, his conduct would never have been made a subject of complaint by those who differed from him in opinion. But the grounds of merited censure lie principally in the use he made of this circumstance, to deceive the people into false notions concerning the character and economy of the church, and to excite in their minds causeless jealousies against its most worthy and faithful ministers. One sober thought on this subject will satisfy the candid, that it is the *preachers* mainly who feel the weight of the bishop's power to appoint them ; and if they could consent to leave him in possession of it, others surely need not complain. Indeed nothing short of the most palpable misrepresentation of the subject could have induced the *people* to suppose that *their* rights and privileges were invaded by it. Yet this was made the theme of Mr. O'Kelly and his confederates, in their efforts to raise a party. The people, as a matter of course, had not entered into all the reasonings which influenced the preachers in adhering to the system which they deemed best calculated to give efficiency to their itinerant operations. Having a catalogue of frightful images placed before their minds, inscribed with the disgusting names of 'popery,' 'usurpation,' 'tyranny,' 'oppression,' &c, and all associated with the economy of Methodism, was calculated to produce the designed effect. And in this way Mr. O'Kelly and his coadjutors set themselves to work to put in motion all the discordant elements which came within their influence, and turn away the affections of the people from their regular and afflicted pastors, and unite them under their own management and control.

To give effect to their representations, they addressed themselves to the prevailing prejudices of the people. They adopted the title of 'Republican Methodists,'—professed to be sufferers in the cause of truth and liberty,—construed the remonstrances of those whom they abused into persecution,—joined with those who had been expelled in their wonted complaints of having been wronged and oppressed, and extended their softening liberality even to those who had in former years been ill used by them.

The effect of such a course of proceeding may be more easily imagined than described. The spirit of piety, with all its train of heavenly affections, withered under its influence. Friends were divided. The order and harmony of peaceful societies were broken in upon, for the purpose of making proselytes. Instead of inculcating peace and good will among men, the zeal of preachers and other partisans was exerted to circulate whatever could be coloured

into the appearance of scandal upon the church in which they had been nourished and brought up,—to impugn the characters and motives of the most worthy ministers of Christ, and to excite a spirit of reciprocal animosity and strife, rather than of brotherly kindness and charity. A pretty just picture of the state of things may be inferred from the following remarks, the result of Mr. Snethen's observations, made at a time, and under circumstances, to form a just opinion respecting it. 'The republican Methodists have not had much leisure to call sinners to repentance. For these seven years the most of their attention has been taken up in exposing the evils of episcopacy, correcting its abuses, and opening the eyes of the poor deluded people, who were sinking under the billows of despotism.' With a knowledge of this fact, who will wonder at the following interrogatories by the same author?—'Where are the societies which Mr. O'Kelly and his brethren have formed, of those who have been converted by their instrumentality, since they have been separated from the episcopal Methodists? Where are the seals of their ministry; the living epistles written upon the fleshly tables of the heart, known and read of all men?' In the stead of such fruit of their labours, as Dr. Phœbus says, 'some grew prayerless, and faithless, and finally apostatized; and, upon their death beds, lamented the unhappy division from which they dated their backslidings.'

It was upon this field of spiritual desolation, which before this scene of controversy and turmoil promised a rich harvest, that young Mr. George stood, when he made the observations contained in his narrative. That he declared this schism to have been among the most painful events which occurred during his itinerancy, and alluded to it for the obvious purpose of admonition to others, will be a sufficient apology for introducing thus much of the history of it in an account of his life. To a man of his religious temperament, whose feelings were always alive to whatever had a tendency to retard a work of revival, who can adequately judge of the sensations he felt, when he witnessed the effects of this conflict, especially as he found among the disaffected some who were of his own family,—his kinsmen according to the flesh? His whole life testified how sincerely he exclaimed, 'I had sorrow upon sorrow.' When the excitement which Mr. O'Kelly and his partisans produced had expended its cholerick effervescence, their theme became stale and uninteresting even to those who at first listened to it with deep attention, and altogether obnoxious to those who were never pleased with such scenes of discord and strife; and the work of their hands soon sunk into decline, and remains only as a beacon to admonish others.]

(To be continued.)

SACRED POETRY.

The Methodist Hymnbook :—Methodist Harmonist.

CRITICS do not always agree ; nor, when they turn prophets also, is it to be wondered at if their predictions sometimes fail. We remember to have seen, in the *Edinburgh Review* of some years past, an extremely severe critique on the living Christian poet of Sheffield, (England,) Mr. James Montgomery ;—with very discouraging auguries of his subsequent fame. That the poet's muse both survived the critic's lash, and disappointed his ill bodings, we need not say. More recently, in a number of *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, Mr. Montgomery's talents and productions are as highly extolled, as, in the rival *Edinburgh oracle*, they had formerly been censured. But here, again, we have a striking instance of the discrepant judgments of different critical tribunals. Both Mr. Montgomery and his reviewer undertake, and we think very successfully, not only to refute, but to demolish,—as but a splendid specimen of false reasoning,—the entire theory of that eminent man—Dr. Samuel Johnson, on the subject of sacred poetry. It has been said that none but a poet should criticise a poet, or, of course, poetry. Whether this sentiment be correct or not, we shall not take upon us to determine. Nor indeed, for our present purpose, is it necessary. The subject of this article has been so happily and so forcibly treated by Mr. Montgomery, and his reviewer in *Blackwood*, that we shall not hesitate to adopt either their sentiments or their language, so far as they fall within our plan and limits. And as we shall intersperse our own observations, and contract or modify those of our authors at pleasure, we here give this general notice, that the reader's attention may not be diverted by frequent references.

The extraordinary man above named, Dr. Samuel Johnson, entertained the opinion that 'the intercourse between God and the human soul cannot be poetical.' In other words, that religion is too high and sacred a theme for poetical genius. The argumentation with which he defended this position, could hardly be otherwise than plausible,—coming from such a man. Yet, great and wise as he was, never, it is believed, was there a more grievous error than that of his vain endeavour to exclude from the province of poetry, its noblest, highest, and holiest domain. Shut the gates of heaven against poetry, and her flights along this earth will be feeble and low,—her wings clogged and heavy,—and her voice, like that of the caged lark, so different from the hymning of that aerial bird when lost to sight in the bosom of the rosy cloud,—will fail to call forth the deepest responses from the sanctuary of our spirit.

Dr. Johnson thought 'the ideas of Christian theology too sacred for fiction.'—True ;—but 'fiction' is not the word. Fiction undoubtedly would do great wrong to Christian theology. But there is no necessity for such a wrong : and a truly Christian poet, guarded

by awe, and fear, and love, may move his wings unblamed, and to the glory of God, even among the most awful sanctities of his faith. These sanctities may be too awful for 'fiction,'—but the proper word here is 'poetry,'—and then, reflecting on the poetry of Isaiah, and of David, conversant with the holy of holies, we feel that poetry need not profane those other sanctities, if it be like its subject, indeed divine. Those bards, it is true, were inspired. With them

——— 'the name
Of prophet and of poet was the same :'

but still, the power in the soul of a great *Christian* poet, though not in that highest sense inspired, is,—may we not say it,—of the same kind,—proceeds from the same source, and is inferior but in degree : for religion itself is always an inspiration : it is felt to be so even in the prose of holy men,—and why not in their poetry? If the living coal from the altar of God have touched their lips, it will be felt.

There is certainly something very captivating and imposing in the leading sentiment on which Dr. Johnson founds his argument, viz :—that 'man admitted to implore the mercy of his Creator, and plead the merits of his Redeemer, is already in a higher state than poetry can confer.' This, undoubtedly, is sometimes true. There are seasons when the rapt soul, feeling the utter barrenness and inadequacy of all human expression, is compelled to say,

'Come then, expressive silence, muse his praise!'

Yet this very line, while denying the power of poetry to be adequate to adoration, is itself glorious poetry. And so also is that sublime couplet of our own hymn, which we trust many of our readers,—
'unutterably full, of glory and of God,'—have often felt,—

'The speechless awe that dares not move,
And all the silent heaven of love.'

There may be times when the feelings of the devout worshipper are too divine for any words,—either of prose or poetry. Then the creature kneels, and prostrates himself, mute before his Maker. Yet there are other states of mind, in which we feel ourselves indeed drawn near to God, in the visitations which he vouchsafes to us from heaven,—yet with no such awful speechlessness laid upon us. On the contrary, our tongues are loosened, and the heart that burns and swells, will vent itself in speech ;—perhaps in sacred song,—breathing forth, in its inspirations, hymns and psalms,—poetry indeed,—if there be poetry on this earth.

It is most true that poetry cannot confer that exalted state. Yet it may, nevertheless, in some measure, and to some degree, breathe audibly some of the emotions which constitute its blessedness. Poetry may even help the soul to ascend to those celestial heights ;—by preparing and disposing it to expand and open itself to the highest and holiest influences of religion. For there may be poetry inspired directly from God's own word,—strong in its language, and embued with its spirit,—that word which would be unexistent,

but for the pages of the Holy Bible. And never, never, can such strains become unaffecting, while it is our lot to die. Indeed, from the lips of genius, inspired by religion, such words have flowed, on heavenly topics, as are felt to be poetry almost worthy of the celestial ardours around the Throne, and by their majesty to 'link us to the radiant angels,'—than whom we were made but a little lower, and with whom we may, when time shall be no more, be equalled in heaven. When God himself is, with all awe and reverence, made the subject of poetry, then it is its office,—its sacred office,—to exalt,—not the subject,—but the soul that contemplates it. The perfections of God, we know, cannot be improved ;—yet, while He abideth in his own incomprehensible being, the creature, too willing to crawl blind and hoodwinked along the earth, like a worm, may be raised by the voice of the charmer, some sweet singer of Israel, from his slimy track, and be made to soar, on wings, up into the ether.

He who denies, says Mr. Montgomery, that there can be a strain of poetry suited to the expression of faith, thanksgiving, repentance, and supplication, 'in the most perfect manner, without either extravagance or impiety, must be prepared to deny, that there is poetry in those very passages in the Psalms, in which, according to the judgment of all ages since they were written, there may be found the greatest sublimity, power, and pathos.'

Simple expression, in religion, is indeed, as Dr. Johnson argues, most sublime. But why should not poetry be simple in its expression ? To conceive that it must necessarily be otherwise, is a great error. Its language, even in its highest glory, is often direct and simple, as that of very childhood,—and for that reason sublime. The great secret of being sublime, as Dr. Blair has well remarked, is to say great things in few and plain words. The sacred Scriptures, the same judicious critic adds, contain what must be called poetry, in the strictest sense of that word :—and hence arises a most invincible argument in its honor. No person can imagine that to be a frivolous and contemptible art, which has been employed by writers under divine inspiration ; and has been chosen as a proper channel for conveying to the world the knowledge of divine truth. To their conciseness and propriety of expression, the poetry of the Hebrews is indebted for much of its sublimity ; and all writers who attempt the sublime, might profit much by imitating, in this respect, the style of the Old Testament. Of all writings, ancient or modern, the Holy Scriptures afford us the highest instances of true sublimity.

'That man,' continues Mr. Montgomery, 'has neither ear, nor heart, nor imagination, to know true poetry, or to enjoy its sweetest and sublimest influences, who can doubt the poetical supremacy (if the phrase may be allowed) of such passages as the Song of the Angels in the Third, and the Morning Hymn of our First Parents, in the Fifth Book of the *Paradise Lost* ; the first part of the Ninth Book of the *Night Thoughts* ; and the articulation of Millennial Blessedness, in the

Sixth Book of the Task ;—yet these are on sacred subjects, and these are religious poetry. The same may be fearlessly affirmed concerning many other portions of the same poems ; which, notwithstanding their religious bias, are ranked, by unbelievers themselves, among the noblest efforts of intellect and imagination combined, which modern times can produce, and which have been rarely equalled in the most illustrious ages of antiquity.'

Milton, 'that mighty orb of song,' speaking of his own divine gift,—the gift of poetry,—thus eloquently pours forth his rich conceptions :—

'These abilities are the inspired gift of God, rarely bestowed, and are of power to inbreed and cherish in a great people the seeds of virtue and public civility ; to allay the perturbation of the mind, and set the affections to a right tune ; to celebrate in glorious and lofty hymns the throne and equipage of God's Almightyness, and what he suffers to be wrought with high providence in his church ; to sing victorious agonies of martyrs and saints, the deeds and triumphs of just and pious nations, doing valiantly through faith against the enemies of Christ, to deplore the general relapse of kingdoms and states from virtue and God's true worship. Lastly, whatsoever in religion is holy and sublime, and in virtue amiable or grave ; whatsoever hath passion, or admiration in all the changes of that which is called fortune from without, or the wily subtleties and reflexions of men's thoughts from within ; all these things with a solid and treatable smoothness, to paint out and describe,—teaching over the whole book of morality and virtue, through all instances of example, with such delight to those, especially of soft and delicious temper, who will not so much as look upon Truth herself, unless they see her elegantly dressed ; that, whereas the paths of honesty and good life that appear now rugged and difficult, appear to all men easy and pleasant, though they were rugged and difficult indeed.'

On this admirable passage, Mr. Montgomery remarks :—

'The art, of which this is a true description, must be the highest of all arts, and require the greatest powers to excel in it. That art is poetry, and the special subjects on which it is here exhibited as being most happily employed are almost all sacred. The writer of this splendid panegyric of the art, in which he himself equalled the most gifted of its adepts, was Milton, who, in his subsequent works, exemplified all the varieties of poetical illustration here enumerated, and justified his lofty estimate of the capabilities of verse, hallowed to divine themes, by the success with which he celebrated such, in *Paradise Lost*, *Paradise Regained*, and *Samson Agonistes*. Yet we are continually told, that religious subjects are incapable of poetic treatment. Nothing can be more contrary to common sense ; nothing is more unanswerably contradicted by matter of fact. There are only four long poems in the English language, that are often reprinted, and consequently better known and more read than any other similar compositions of equal bulk. Three of these are decidedly religious in their whole or their prevailing character,—*Paradise Lost*, the *Night Thoughts*, and the *Task* : and of the fourth, *The Seasons*, it may be

said, that one of its greatest charms is the pure and elevated spirit of devotion which occasionally breathes out amidst the reveries of fancy and the descriptions of nature, as though the poet had sudden and transporting glimpses of the Creator himself through the perspective of his works; while the crowning hymn of the whole is one of the most magnificent specimens of verse in any language, and only inferior to the inspired original in the Book of Psalms, of which it is for the most part a paraphrase. As much may be said of Pope's Messiah, which leaves all his original productions immeasurably behind it, in elevation of thought, affluence of imagery, beauty of diction, and fervency of spirit. Indeed, this poem is only depreciated in the eyes of ordinary and prejudiced readers by that which constitutes its glory and supreme worth,—that every sentiment and figure in it is taken directly from the prophesies of Isaiah; compared with which it is indeed but as the moon reflecting light borrowed from the sun; yet, considered in itself, it cannot be denied, that had Pope been the entire author of the poem just as it stands, (or with no other prototype than Virgil's Pollio before him,) and drawn the whole from the treasures of his own imagination, he would have been the first poet in rank, to whom this country has given birth; for in the works of no other will be found so many and such transcendent excellencies as are comprised in this small piece. It follows, that poetry of the highest order may be composed on sacred themes; and the fact that three out of the only four long poems in English literature, which can be called popular, are at the same time religious,—this fact ought for ever to silence the cuckoo note, which is echoed from one fool's mouth to another's, (for many of the wise in this respect are fools,) that religion and poetry are incompatible; no man, in his right mind, who knows what both words mean, will ever admit the absurdity for a moment. It is true, that there is a great deal of religious verse, which, as poetry, is worthless: but it is equally true, that there is a great deal of genuine poetry associated with pure and undefiled religion. With men of the world, however, to whom religion is an abomination, all poetry associated with it *loses caste*, and becomes degraded beyond redemption by that which most exalts it in the esteem of those who really know what they judge.'—Again;—'The sum of the whole is simply this,—and let who will be offended, the fact cannot be disproved,—that our good poets have seldom been good Christians, and our good Christians have seldom been good poets. Those of the latter class who have attempted to write verse, have not succeeded, from want of skill in the art, even when they were otherwise really endowed with intellectual qualifications; such—such, for example, was Jeremy Taylor. Among the former class may be mentioned Waller and Prior.'

'If a knowledge of religion, as the chief concern of beings created for glory, honor, and immortality, were only as common as taste for *genuine poetry*, (which, after all, is sufficiently rare,) it would be found that there is already much more *genuine devotional poetry* in our language than is generally imagined, and it requires no extraordinary sagacity to say, that there would soon be much more. Our great authors, unhappily, have too often wanted the inspiration of piety, and religious poetry has been held in contempt by many learned, and wise,

and elegant minds, because religion itself was either perfectly indifferent, troublesomely intrusive, or absolutely hateful to them.'——
 'So neglectful of religion have many of our chief poets been, that it cannot be discovered from their writings whether they were of any religion at all;—except that it may be fairly presumed they were professing *Christians*, because they made no profession whatever; for had they been *Jews*, *Turks*, or *Pagans*, they would have shown some tokens of reverence for their faith, if not openly gloried in it, and made its records and legends the themes of their most animated compositions. *What God* is intended in the last line of the "Elegy written in a Country Churchyard?"

"The bosom of his father and his God!"

Search every fragment of the writings of the celebrated author, and it will be difficult to answer this question, simple as it is, from them: from the Elegy itself it would be impossible, except that the God of the "*youth* to fortune and to fame unknown" is meant; and that this may have been the true God, must be inferred from his worshipper having been buried "in a country churchyard." There is indeed a couplet like the following, in the body of the poem:

"And many a *holy text* around she strows
 To teach the rustic moralist to die:"—

but, throughout the whole, there is not a single allusion to "an hereafter," except what may be inferred, by courtesy, from the concluding line already mentioned. After the couplet above quoted, the poet leaves his "rustic moralist to die," and very pathetically refers to the natural unwillingness of the humblest individual to be forgotten, and the "longing, lingering look," which even the miserable cast behind, on leaving "the warm precincts of the cheerful day;" but hope, nor fear, doubt, nor faith, concerning a *future* state, seems ever to have touched the poet's apprehension, exquisitely affected as he must have been with all that interests "mortal man," in the composition of these unrivalled stanzas; unrivalled truly they are, though there is not an idea in them, beyond the churchyard, in which they are said to have been written. No doubt this deficiency may be vindicated by phlegmatic skeptics and puling sentimentalists, who will cordially agree to reprobate what, in their esteem, would have been contrary to good manners; but is it consistent, in a "Christian poet," to be thus "ashamed of the gospel of Christ," by which "life and immortality were brought to light," on occasions, when it ought to be his glory to acknowledge it, at the peril of his reputation? These remarks are not made to throw obloquy on the name of an author, who has justly acquired a greater reputation than almost any other, by literary remains, so few and small as his are; they have been introduced here to show with what meditated precaution piety is shunned by Christian poets, who, like Gray, seem to be absolutely possessed by the mythology, not only of the Greeks and Romans, but even of the Goths and Vandals.'

'Songs and hymns, in honor of their gods, are found among all people who have either religion or verse. There is scarcely any pagan poetry, ancient or modern, in which allusions to the national mythology are not so frequent as to constitute the most copious materials, as well

as the most brilliant embellishments. The poets of Persia and Arabia, in like manner, have adorned their gorgeous strains with the fables and morals of the Koran. The relics of Jewish song which we possess, with few exceptions, are consecrated immediately to the glory of God, by whom, indeed, they were inspired. The first Christians were wont to edify themselves in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs; and though we have no specimens of these left, except the occasional doxologies ascribed to the redeemed in the book of Revelation, it cannot be doubted that they used not only the psalms of the Old Testament, literally, or accommodated to the circumstances of a new and rising church, but that they had original lays of their own, in which they celebrated the praises of Christ, as the Saviour of the world. In the middle ages, the Roman Catholic and Greek churches stately adopted singing as an essential part of public worship; but this, like the reading of the Scriptures, was too frequently in an unknown tongue, by an affectation of wisdom, to excite the veneration of ignorance, when the learned, in their craftiness, taught that "Ignorance is the mother of devotion;" and Ignorance was very willing to believe it. At the era of the Reformation, psalms and hymns, in the vernacular tongue, were revived in Germany, England, and elsewhere, among the other means of grace, of which Christendom had been for centuries defrauded.'

'Hymns, [continues our author,] looking at the multitude and mass of them, appear to have been written by all kinds of persons, except poets; and why the latter have not delighted in this department of their own art, is obvious. Just in proportion as the religion of Christ is understood and taught in primitive purity, those who either believe not in its spirituality, or have not proved its converting influence, are careful to avoid meddling with it; so that, if its sacred mysteries have been less frequently and ostentatiously honored by the homage of our poets within the last hundred and fifty years than formerly, they have been less disgraced and violated by absurd and impious associations. The offence of the cross has not ceased; nay, it exists, perhaps, most inveterately, though less apparently, in those countries where religion has been refined from the gross superstitions of the dark ages; for there the humbling doctrines of the gospel are, as of old, a stumbling block to the self righteous, and foolishness to the wise in their own esteem. Many of our eminent poets have belonged to one or the other of these classes; it cannot be surprising, then, that they either knew not, or contemned, "the truth as it is in Jesus."'

Mr. Montgomery, whom we take pleasure in quoting thus frequently and largely on this delightful subject, has given a short specimen from three favorite poets of the last century, who, had they consecrated their talents to the service of the sanctuary, might undoubtedly 'have originated hymns, uniting the charms of poetry with the beauties of holiness. Take first the following lines of Gray.

"See the wretch, that long has tost
On the thorny bed of pain,
At length repair his vigour lost,
And breathe and walk again:

The meanest floweret of the vale,
 The simplest note that swells the gale,
 The common sun, the air, the skies,
 To him are opening Paradise."

'It cannot be questioned, says Mr. Montgomery, that this is genuine poetry, and that the beautiful, but not obvious image in the last couplet, elevates it far above all common-place. Yet there is nothing in the style, nor the cast of sentiment, which might not be employed with corresponding effect on a sacred theme, and in the texture of a hymn. The form of the stanza, and the line that tells of personal experience, in the fact which the writer mentions, remind one [he adds] of the vivid feeling and fluent versification of Charles Wesley, in some of his happiest moods, while the concluding idea is precisely the same with that of Dr. Watts, in a hymn which would not have discredited Gray himself:—

"The opening heavens around me shine,
 With beams of sacred bliss,
 When Jesus shows his mercy mine,
 And whispers, 'I am his!'"

The first line of this beautiful hymn, in the collection in the Methodist Hymnbook, is—

'My God, the spring of all my joys,'

The next specimen is from Collins. We omit it, however, for the sake of brevity.—'In the lucid interval of the madness to which a wounded spirit had reduced him, Collins was found by a visiter with the Bible in his hand. "You see," said he, "I have only one book left, but it is the best!" "Had he," says the amiable poet from whom we have been quoting, "had he had that one book earlier, and learned to derive from it those comforts which it was sent from Heaven to convey to the afflicted, could not *he* have sung 'the death of the righteous,' in numbers as sweet, as tender, and sublime, as those on 'the death of the brave?' Christian views and sublime language might have been quite as harmoniously blended with human regrets and blessed remembrances."

'Turn now to Goldsmith, a writer of a very different character from either Gray or Collins. Here are two stanzas of an English lyric:—

"The wretch, condemn'd with life to part,
 Still, still on hope relies;
 And every pang that rends his heart,
 Bids expectation rise.
 Hope, like the glimmering taper's light,
 Adorns and cheers the way;
 And still, as darker grows the night,
 Emits a brighter ray."

Is *this* poetry? asks Mr. Montgomery;—every reader feels it is. Yet, "if the same ideas were to be given in prose, they could not well be more humbly arrayed. Nothing can be more simple, nothing more exquisite; and hymns, in the same pure and natural manner, might be adapted to every subject in alliance with religion. But by whom? Not by one who had only the delicate ear, the choice expression, the

melodious measures, and the fine conceptions of Goldsmith; but by him who, to all these, should add the piety of Watts, the ardour of Wesley, and the tenderness of Doddridge. Had Goldsmith possessed these latter qualifications, (and they were all within his reach,) would *he* not have left hymns as captivating in their degree, as any of those few, but inestimable productions, which have rendered him the most delightful of our poets, to the greatest number of readers."

'From Gray, and Collins, and Goldsmith, turn to a greater than them all together,—Cowper. Here is a lyric of his,—three stanzas of a hymn:—

"The calm retreat, the silent shade,
With prayer and praise agree,
And seem by thy sweet bounty made
For those that follow Thee.

"There, if thy Spirit touch the soul,
And grace her mean abode,
Oh, with what peace, and joy, and love,
She communes with her God!

"There, like the nightingale, she pours
Her solitary lays;
Nor asks a witness to her song,
Nor sighs for human praise."

'This, too, is felt to be poetry;—nothing can be more affectingly beautiful:—

"Yet will a profane world never be 'smit with the love of *Sacred Song*.' The language of devotion, whether in prose or rhyme, cannot be relished, because it is not understood, by any but those who have experienced the power of the gospel, as bringing salvation to them that believe; for the same reason that the Bible itself is neither acceptable nor intelligible to those who are not taught by the Spirit of God. 'To such, though 'I speak with the tongues of men and of angels' about divine things, 'I am as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.' To those, on the other hand, who have 'tasted the good word of God, and felt the powers of the world to come,' it will be easy to comprehend, that poetry and piety may be as surely united on earth, as they are in heaven before the throne, in the songs of angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect.

"A hymn ought to be as regular in its structure as any other poem; it should have a distinct subject, and that subject should be simple, not complicated, so that whatever skill or labour might be required in the author to develop his plan, there should be little or none required on the part of the reader to understand it. Consequently, a hymn must have a beginning, middle, and end. There should be a manifest gradation in the thoughts, and their mutual dependence should be so perceptible, that they could not be transposed without injuring the unity of the piece; every line carrying forward the connexion, and every verse adding a well proportioned limb to a symmetrical body. The reader should know when the strain is complete, and be satisfied, as at the close of an air in music; while defects and superfluities should be felt by him as annoyances, in whatever part they might occur. The practice of many good men, in framing hymns, has been

quite the contrary. They have begun apparently with the only idea in their mind at the time; another, with little relationship to the former, has been forced upon them by a refractory rhyme; a third became necessary to eke out a verse, a fourth to begin one; and so on, till, having compiled a sufficient number of stanzas of so many lines, and lines of so many syllables, the operation has been suspended; whereas it might, with equal consistency, have been continued to any imaginable length, and the tenth or ten thousandth link might have been struck out, or changed places with any other, without the slightest infraction of the chain; the whole being a series of independent verses, collocated as they came, and the burden a cento of phrases, figures, and ideas, the common property of every writer who had none of his own, and therefore found in the works of each, unimproved, if not unimpaired, from generation to generation.—Such rhapsodies may be sung from time to time, and keep alive devotion already kindled; but they leave no trace in the memory, make no impression on the heart, and fall through the mind as sounds glide through the ear,—pleasant, it may be, in their passage, but never returning to haunt the imagination in retirement, or, in the multitude of the thoughts, to refresh the soul. Of how contrary a character, how transcendently superior in value as well as in influence, are those hymns, which, once heard, are remembered without effort, remembered involuntarily, yet remembered with renewed and increasing delight at every revival! It may be safely affirmed, that the permanent favorites in every collection are those, which, in the requisites before mentioned, or for some other peculiar excellence, are distinguished above the rest. This is so remarkably the case with the compositions of Watts, Wesley, and Newton, the most prolific writers of this class, that no farther illustration is needful than a recurrence to their pages, when it will be found, that the most neglected are generally inferior in literary merit to the most hackneyed ones, which are in every body's mouth, and every body's heart.

“It may be added, that authors who devote their talents to the glory of God, and the salvation of men, ought surely to take as much pains to polish and perfect their offerings of this kind, as secular and profane poets bestow upon their works. Of these, the subjects are too often of the baser sort, and the workmanship as frequently excels the materials; while, on the other hand, the inestimable materials of hymns,—the truths of the everlasting gospel, the very thoughts of God, the very sayings of Christ, the very inspirations of the Holy Ghost, are dishonored by the meanness of the workmanship employed upon them; wood, hay, straw, and stubble, being built upon foundations which ought only to support gold, silver, and precious stones; work that will bear the fire, and be purified by it. The faults in ordinary hymns are vulgar phrase, low words, hard words, technical terms, inverted construction, broken syntax, barbarous abbreviations, that make our beautiful English horrid even to the eye, bad rhymes or no rhymes where rhymes are expected; but, above all, numbers without cadence. A line is no more metre because it contains a certain concatenation of syllables, than so many crotchets and quavers, picked at random, would constitute a bar of music. The syllables in

every division ought to 'ripple like a rivulet,' one producing another as its natural effect, while the rhythm of each line, falling into the general stream at its proper place, should cause the verse to flow in progressive melody, deepening and expanding like a river to the close; or, to change the figure, each stanza should be a poetical tune, played down to the last note. Such subservience of every part to the harmony of the whole is required in all other legitimate poetry, and why it should not be observed in that which is worthiest of all possible pre-eminence, it would be difficult to say; why it is so rarely found in hymns, may be accounted for from the circumstance already stated, that few accomplished poets have enriched their mother tongue with strains of this description."

We most earnestly wish that the above just remarks of Mr. Montgomery, might have their well merited effect on all that tribe of 'camp meeting hymns,'—'spiritual songs,' and 'songsters,' which have contributed so extensively, we fear, to pervert the taste of a large portion of the community; or at least to prevent its improvement. Is it true that these are so superior to the admirable hymns of Charles and John Wesley, and of Watts, and others, mighty orbs of sacred song, which are contained in the Methodist Hymnbook? Are not the latter equally, at least, suited to the social circle, and to 'camp meetings,' as well as to public worship? Or is it not rather a reproach to us even to institute a comparison? The truth is, that all that give any real value to those patchwork, piebald collections, may be found in the Methodist Hymnbook, and those who have this have little occasion to buy them over again. The rest are for the most part such miserable jig ditties, and prose run mad, as it grieves us to think that any either of our preachers or people can bestow on them the favor of their countenance. We know there are very many who do not, and will not. Yet the known extent of this evil,—we greatly fear its growing extent,—and the discredit it brings on us, extort from us these remarks. Should any individual, in consequence of our making them, accuse or even suspect us of any unfriendliness to the spirituality and life of devotional poetry, either for public or social worship, that individual will greatly wrong us. If there be distinguishing excellence in any collection of hymns on earth, it is in the *spirituality*, in conjunction with the sublime poetry, of those in the Methodist Hymnbook. And to say that such hymns, through every gradation of Christian experience, from its first dawns, or our first awakenings, up to the purest and most exalted rapture, quite in the verge of heaven,—that these do not suit our experience, or our family or social circles, or our camp meetings, or any other meetings, is a reflection upon our experience, and upon such meetings, infinitely more discreditable to them than either to our Hymnbook, or to the great and holy men who were its authors and compilers. In a word, if the Methodist Hymnbook is not adapted to our experience, and to those circles and meetings, then, we fear, there must be

something in our experience, or in the manner of managing some of those meetings, which does not become Methodists. And after all, we strongly suspect that the true defect is,—*our own want of a thorough acquaintance with our regular HYMNBOOK, and that every individual among us does not possess it.* We wish we could persuade even the preachers to endeavour to make themselves *thoroughly* acquainted with this Hymnbook, and with a proper variety of tunes suited to its numerous measures, and to the different occasions for using them, and the diversities of individual experience. Then they could personally and practically recommend both the hymns and the tunes. And what a pleasing and edifying amusement,—what a delightful and holy feast,—what a rich treasure, would this be to themselves ! And then how might they instruct, and edify, and cheer, and charm, their friends, in social or other circles ; and also lead, or aid, in hymning holy airs, in fit words, in the public congregations. The true art of poetry, we beg leave to assure them, does by no means consist in the mere rhyming of the final syllable, or in the exact recurrence of a certain number of feet, even though those feet (which, by the way, in the hymns of modern manufacture is not always the case) may be scanned regularly, or have been carefully counted upon the fingers.

The greater part of the hymns in the Methodist Hymnbook, were composed by the Rev. Charles Wesley. Some of them were the productions of the Rev. John Wesley ;—some of the Rev. Samuel Wesley ; others of Dr. Watts ;—a few were translations from the German, by John or Charles Wesley ; and all had the approving stamp of those masters in Israel, and in Christian poesy. The poetic character of the hymns bequeathed to us by these ‘sweet singers,’ needs not our praise. It cannot be unacceptable to our readers, however, to know the sentiments of men who have themselves not only been smitten with the love, but gifted with the gift of sacred song. Mr. Montgomery, it is true, adjudges the first rank, ‘among hymn writers,’ to Dr. Watts. In this sentiment we cannot agree with him ; and his able reviewer in Blackwood justly remarks on it,—‘This assertion [of the preëminence of Dr. Watts] may startle many readers.’ The same critic afterward adds,—‘That a poet of Mr. Montgomery’s power and skill should be blind to the numerous faults and defects of Dr. Watts’s hymns, is not to be supposed, and accordingly he speaks freely of them all, and as truly, but not more so, than he has spoken of their merits.’

Far be it from us to wish to detract a particle from the substantial and just fame of Dr. Watts. As a hymn writer, he may be admitted to hold the next place after Charles Wesley ; and this is high praise. But we cannot allow him to be superior. In the walks of experimental Christianity in particular,—the glory and the high calling of Methodism,—the whole Christian world ought surely to acknowledge Charles Wesley’s hymns to be unparalleled. Dr. Watts himself, with his characteristic and amiable candour, is said to have

acknowledged that he would have been willing to relinquish all the poetic honors derived from his own numerous productions, to have been the author of that single hymn of Charles Wesley's, denominated 'Wrestling Jacob,' commencing thus in our collection,

'Come, O thou Traveller unknown,'—

But let us hear Mr. Montgomery.—'Excepting his [Charles Wesley's] "Short Hymns on Passages of Scripture," which of course make the whole tour of Bible literature, and are of very unequal merit,—Christian experience, from the deeps of affliction, through all the gradations of doubt, fear, desire, faith, hope, expectation, to the transports of perfect love, in the very beams of the beatific vision,—Christian experience furnishes him with everlasting and inexhaustible themes; and it must be confessed, that he has celebrated them with an affluence of diction, and a splendour of colouring, rarely surpassed. At the same time, he has invested them with a power of truth, and endeared them both to the imagination and the affections, with a pathos which makes feeling conviction, and leaves the understanding little to do but to acquiesce in the decision of the heart. As the poet of Methodism, he has sung the doctrines of the gospel, as they are expounded among that people, dwelling especially on the personal appropriation of the words of eternal life to the sinner, or the saint, as the test of his actual state before God, and admitting nothing less than the full assurance of faith as the privilege of believers:—

"Faith, mighty faith, the promise sees,
Relies on that alone,
Laughs at impossibilities,
And says—"It shall be done."

"Faith lends her realizing light,
The clouds disperse, the shadows fly,
The Invisible appears in sight,
And God is seen by mortal eye."

'These are glimpses of our author's manner,—broad, indeed, and awful, but signally illustrative, like lightning out of darkness, revealing for a moment the whole hemisphere. Among C. Wesley's highest achievements may be recorded, "Come, O thou Traveller unknown," &c, in which, with consummate art, he has carried on the action of a lyrical drama; every turn in the conflict with the mysterious Being against whom he wrestles all night, being marked with precision by the varying language of the speaker, accompanied by intense, increasing interest, till the rapturous moment of discovery, when he prevails, and exclaims, "I know Thee, Saviour, who Thou art," &c.—The hymn, "Come on, my partners in distress," &c, anticipates the strains, and is written almost in the spirit, of the church triumphant.—"Thou God of glorious majesty!" &c, is a sublime contemplation in another vein;—solemn, collected, unimpassioned thought, but thought occupied with that which is of everlasting import to a dying man, standing on the lapse of a moment between "two eternities."—The hymn on the Day of Judgment, "Stand the omnipotent decree," begins with a note, abrupt and awakening like the sound of the last trumpet. This

is altogether one of the most daring and victorious flights of our author. Such pieces prove, that if Charles Wesley's hymns are less varied than might have been desired for general purposes, it was from choice, and predilection for certain views of the gospel in its effects upon human minds, and not from want of diversity of gifts. It is probable that the severer taste of his brother, the Rev. John Wesley, greatly tempered the extravagance of Charles, pruned his luxuriations, and restrained his impetuosity, in those hymns of his, which form a large proportion of the Methodists' collection; the few which are understood to be John's in that book, being of a more intellectual character than what are known to be Charles's, while the latter are wonderfully improved by abridgment and compression, in comparison with the originals, as they were first given to the public.'

The reviewer in Blackwood seems himself to have been enraptured with many of the hymns of the Rev. Charles Wesley, which he had learned, in some poor cottage, when 'a boy.'—It were to be wished that he had continued some visits of this kind, when a man;—or, at least, that he had condescended, at some period of ripe years, to step occasionally even into some 'poor' Methodist chapel, where he might have felt more than the revival of the delightful charm of his boyhood, by hearing those divine songs, in divine airs, again 'breathed from human lips.'

'Many of his [the Rev. Charles Wesley's] hymns [says the reviewer] we committed to memory in very early life, having found them in the cottage of a poor family which we visited so often when a schoolboy, that we were as one of the humble household; we can repeat them all still; though since we ceased to be a boy, and that is a long, weary while, we never heard one of them breathed from human lips, except perhaps in some dream of the olden time,—some tender reverie, peopled by the phantoms of the past—from our own—as they murmured almost unconsciously the melancholy music of other years.'

Of the hymn in our collection beginning thus,—

'The God of Abraham praise,'

we know not the author. Mr. Montgomery calls it 'a noble ode,' and avers that there is not in our language 'a lyric of more majestic style, more elevated thought, or more glorious imagery.'

We have said that a few of our hymns are translations from the German, by Messrs. John and Charles Wesley, who, like true Christian eclectics, drew their treasures from every rich mine which God's good providence opened to them. Their acquaintance with the German language, and with excellent men of the 'Unitas Fratrum,' (the Moravians,) enabled them to avail themselves of these sources. The hymn which commences thus,—

'Commit thou all thy griefs,'—

is a translation from the German of *Paul Gerhard*. That commencing thus,

'O God, thou bottomless abyss,'

is from the German of *Doctor Breithaupt*, a Lutheran abbot. And that,

‘Jesus, whose glory’s streaming rays,’

is from the German of *Wolfgang Chr. Dessler*.*

We were desirous, in connexion with sacred poetry, to add some supplemental remarks on the Methodist *Harmonist*, and the state of singing among us; but are apprehensive that we shall be led to transgress the limit allowed for this article. Indeed this is a subject worthy of a separate article,—and of a good one too. We wish we were capable of furnishing such a one. Is there no amateur,—no genuine and warm hearted lover of vocal sacred music,—who is at the same time a connoisseur in this holy and delightful art and science, who will aid us? At the General Conference held in Baltimore in the year 1820, we had ourselves the honor and the pleasure to propose the adoption of measures for the compilation of a general tune book, adapted to the wants of the church, and to the various metres and hymns in our excellent Hymnbook. This was done at the suggestion of a gentleman in Philadelphia, who has long been most commendably devoted to sacred music, and made it a source of devout, and rational, and elegant pleasure, to himself, as well as to his friends, in many leisure hours. ‘The Methodist Harmonist’ was the result, and was the production of an experienced committee appointed for the purpose. The following is the ‘Preface’ to this valuable collection.

‘Singing forms such an interesting and important branch of Divine service, that every effort to improve the science of sacred music should meet with corresponding encouragement. Nothing tends more, when rightly performed, to elevate the mind, and tune it to the strains of pure devotion. Hence the high estimation in which it has been constantly held by the Christian church. Indeed, every considerable revival of true godliness has been attended, not only with the cultivation and enlargement of knowledge in general, but of sacred poetry and music in particular. Singing and making melody in the heart to the Lord, is the natural result of having the love of God shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost. The melodious notes of many voices, harmoniously uniting to sound the praises of God, cannot but inspire the heart of the Christian to devotion, and elevate the affections to things spiritual and divine. Who then can be uninterested in the improvement of a science so beneficial to the church of God? What heart that has ever vibrated at the inspiring sounds of sacred and vocal music, but must exult in every attempt that is made to cultivate and diffuse the knowledge of this useful auxiliary in spreading the knowledge of God our Saviour?’

* For the above facts we are chiefly indebted to an interesting pamphlet on ‘Hymnology,’ by the Rev. Thomas Roberts, A. M., of Bath, Eng. This gentleman, possessing himself a highly cultivated and poetic mind, we take pleasure also in saying, concurs with us most fully in the preëminent rank due to Charles Wesley, as a writer of hymns.

Though the Methodist Episcopal Church has never been insensible to the advantages resulting from the knowledge and practice of vocal music, having always used it,—perhaps more than most other denominations of Christians,—in public assemblies and private associations; yet a suitable tune book, adapted to the various hymns and metres of its hymn book, has long been a desideratum in its spiritual economy. Several efforts, indeed, have been made by individuals, to supply this deficiency. The subject was brought before the General Conference at its last session; and it was finally referred to the discretion of the book agents.

Believing such a collection of tunes, as should be suited to the various metres and subjects of our hymns, would be highly advantageous to the members and friends of our Church, soon after the conference closed its session, the agents adopted measures to accomplish this very desirable object. For this purpose a committee, consisting of members of our Church, was appointed, who, besides their competency to this undertaking, felt a deep interest in the reputation and utility of this very important part of Divine service. They were requested, in conformity as nearly as practicable to the requisition of our discipline, to make a selection of tunes from authors of approved merit, keeping in view the various sections of our widely extended connexion, that the peculiarity of taste, in the choice of tunes, might, as far as possible, be gratified. They entered upon their labour with cheerfulness, and persevered with conscientious care and diligence, until they brought their work to a close: and the tunes comprised in the following selection will evince the result of their exertions, and their communication to the agents, with which we close this preface, will explain the manner in which they executed the trust confided to them.

“DEAR BRETHREN,—Your committee whose task it has been, by your request, to compile a book of tunes for the use of the Methodist Episcopal Church, report,—That they have been fully aware of the extreme difficulty of making such a selection of tunes as should in all respects be accommodated either to the fancy or taste of every section of our widely extended connexion. In the use of any particular style of tunes, so much generally depends upon education, local feelings, or mental constitution, that, except with those who are skilled in the science of music, the choice of a tune is seldom caused by a discovery of its intrinsic worth, or its adaptation to the solemnities of Christian worship. Your committee, therefore, will neither be surprised, nor disappointed, if their selection in coming before the public, meet with some of those discouragements which have attended works of a similar nature.

Your committee, however, have not been regardless of the partialities of our societies, in different parts of the Union. They have availed themselves of standard works which have obtained celebrity in the eastern and southern states, as well as those that are in general use among us. The best European authors have also been consulted. Books edited by members of our church, or with a design to suit our hymnbook, have received particular attention. They have neglected no means of ascertaining the wishes of our friends, and of accommodating as far as possible their plan to those wishes.

It may be proper to suggest that the primary object of your committee has been, not to prepare a collection of tunes for social circles, or singing associations, (though they hope the work will not be unacceptable even in this light,) but, according to your own directions, for the use of worshipping congregations. They have, therefore, in the first place, carefully avoided the choice of all such tunes, as from the intricacy or unsuitableness of their style are incapable of being easily learned by ordinary congregations; for one of the most important objects of public singing is lost when every tuneful voice in the house of God cannot join in the solemn exercise.

Secondly. In cordial approbation of that clause of our discipline which disapproves of fugue tunes, they have (with the exception of a very few, the use of which has been established by general practice) passed by those distinguished by that peculiarity.

Thirdly. In order to assist leaders of singing, they have carefully affixed over each hymn in the Hymnbook, the name of such tune as in their opinion is suitable to that hymn.

Your committee have thought proper to insert brief instructions in the rudiments of music, which will be found of great utility where the work is introduced into singing schools.

Thus, after the labour of nearly a twelvemonth, your committee have the pleasure of delivering into your hands the result of their joint exertions: they are happy in having this opportunity of contributing their part towards the improvement of one of the most delightful, as well as one of the most devotional parts of divine worship. Uninfluenced by the expectation or desire of any pecuniary recompense, they only wish as a reward for their labours the approbation of their brethren, beloved in Christ, who compose the General and Annual Conferences, and that of the membership of the Methodist Church. We have long needed a work which might be considered as a standard of music for our connexion in America. That which your committee present to you, is an attempt for this, according to the best of their judgment.

Finally, praying that the blessing of Heaven may accompany their efforts, they would subjoin the language of our bishops, as a just expression of their own sentiments:—‘We exhort all to sing with the spirit, and with the understanding also: and thus may the high praises of God be set up from east to west, from north to south; and we shall be happily instrumental in leading the devotion of thousands, and shall rejoice to join them in time and eternity.’—All which is respectfully submitted.

JOHN M. SMITH,
DANIEL AYRES,
JOHN D. MYERS,
G. P. DISOSWAY.”

New-York, Oct. 23, 1821.

As we yet hope to see the day,—would that it might be speedily,—when, among the multitudes of our congregations and members, every individual capable of using it may be possessed of the Methodist Hymnbook, so do we trust yet to see a corresponsive introduction of the excellent *Harmonist* adapted to it;—and that it will be universally adopted as our standard Tunebook, as the

Hymnbook is for our hymns. In this case, how great would be the pleasure which we should experience in the extensive intercourse which exists between all the parts of our wide spread community, to find ourselves always *at home*, in the *tunes*, as well as in the *hymns*. Such a uniformity in our tunes, and such a practical familiarity with them, would have the most direct and powerful tendency to accomplish that great desideratum,—a congregational, hearty, and devout coöperation in singing them. This indeed would be charming, and link us truly ‘to the radiant angels;’—to sing, says the admirable Wesley, with the spirit and with the understanding, in hymns ‘which are both sense and poetry; such as would sooner provoke a critic to turn Christian, than a Christian to turn critic,’ —‘especially when sung in well composed and well adapted tunes, not by a handful of wild unawakened striplings, but by a whole serious congregation: and these not lolling at ease,—drawling out one word after another, but all standing before God, and praising him lustily and with a good courage.’—Improvements doubtless may be made: yet, as a whole, for our congregational singing, we question whether a better guide can be found than the ‘Methodist Harmonist.’ We know this to be the opinion also of much better judges than we pretend to be. And if this brief notice shall contribute in any measure to induce the proper and deserved attention both to our Hymnbook and Harmonist, our present object will be accomplished; and we shall hope that the church, and our congregations generally, will speedily realize the happy results. We beg leave, in closing, to express our gratification that the compilers of our Tunebook concur with us in deprecating the frequent introduction into ordinary congregational singing, of fugue tunes, and a complicated artificial harmony. We have often felt and mourned over this as a lamentable destroyer of the glory of *Methodist* congregational singing; and as the chief if not the sole cause, in fact, of that deplorable evil so extensively, we fear, creeping in among us, by which this heavenly part of worship is confined, as in the orchestres of public shows or theatres, to a few individuals, technically styled *the singers*. This grieves us greatly, and ought not so to be. On this point, the excellent Dr. Adam Clarke has expressed himself with so much more force and venerable authority than we can possibly aspire to, that no reader, or singer, we trust, will refuse to hear and to weigh his words.

‘The *singing* which is here recommended, [says this eminent divine, note on Coloss. iii, 16,] is widely different from what is commonly used in most Christian congregations; a congeries of *unmeaning* sounds, associated to bundles of nonsensical, and often ridiculous *repetitions*, which at once both deprave and disgrace the church of Christ. *Melody*, which is allowed to be the most proper for devotional music, is now sacrificed to an exuberant *harmony*, which requires not only many *different kinds of voices*, but *different musical instruments*, to support it. And by these preposterous means, the *simplicity* of the

Christian worship is destroyed, and all *edification* totally prevented. And this kind of singing is amply proved to be very injurious to the personal piety of those employed in it: even of those who enter with a considerable share of humility and Christian meekness, how few continue to sing with GRACE in their hearts unto the Lord?

And again,—on Eph. v, 19,—‘*Singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord.*’—The heart always going with the lips. It is a shocking profanation of divine worship, to draw nigh to God with the lips, while the heart is far from him. It is too often the case, that in public worship, men are carried off from the *sense* of the words by the *sounds* that are put to them. And how few choirs of singers are there in the universe, whose hearts ever accompany them in what they call singing the praises of God?

It will be perceived, at the same time, that nothing here said by us, or quoted from Mr. Wesley, or Dr. Clarke, is intended, or calculated, in the slightest degree, to discourage or to disparage the most genuine good singing, according to the strictest rules of,—we had almost said,—this divine art. Neither do we object to the forming of associations for improvement in it, but highly commend them;—nor to the leaders and regulators of congregational singing sitting together for this purpose, in whatever part of the church may be judged most convenient. It is the *neglect* of singing, on one hand, and the *abuse* of it, on the other, against which we protest. ‘If praising God and the Lamb [says the late Rev. Samuel Bradburn] be so great a part of the employment of saints and angels in heaven, surely it ought not to be considered as a trifling or insignificant part of divine worship upon earth. Yet how many, who consider themselves as true Christians, make little or no account of it. Leaving all other descriptions of professors to themselves, is there no blame due to any of the people called Methodists concerning their singing? What can exceed the *doctrine*, the *language*, and the *experimental part* of our hymns? How have some of them been blessed to thousands! Why then are the ministers in most places grieved, first, by a great many of the congregation coming in when singing is over, and often not till prayer is nearly finished? And, secondly, why, as soon as the sermon is done, are so many sometimes seen going away? Is hearing a man talk to you, what you call worshipping God? Alas for you! this shows the low state of your souls. Preaching has its use; but if *preaching alone* be considered as public worship, it is a sad mistake. To say the best, it is the least part of it; for prayer and praise are the chief parts of the true Scriptural worship of God in Christ Jesus. I fear very much lest the singing in our chapels should be wholly left to a set of singers. I have no objection to singers sitting together, and taking the lead, if the congregation can follow them; nor do I think there is any evil in the singers, where they are numerous, occasionally singing a few verses alone, if the tune be a good, but difficult one: but even this should be only once out of two or three times during divine service, and never, if the words are not for the glory of God. How like a little heaven does an assembly of pious people appear, when joining with angels and glorified saints in singing the praises of

God and our Saviour! Such we have often seen and heard to our comfort, and there is no need of altering this means of grace and proof of our love; but rather improve herein, by taking the advice of St. Paul, "Let the word of Christ dwell in you in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in *psalms*, and *hymns*, and *spiritual songs*, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord."

We will barely add that neither should light, flippant, or irreverent things, (not worthy of the name of sacred tunes,) ever be suffered to banish from among us those holy and admirable compositions,—so much the better if old and familiar, and so much the more sublime if simple,—which, in other times, have thrilled through every soul in our congregations, and inspired their devotions with little short of celestial rapture;—when, 'with one mind, and one mouth,' the full chorus of the whole assembly thus glorified God.

A REVIEW

Of the 'Conventional Articles for the Associated Methodist Churches,' agreed upon in a Convention held in the city of Baltimore, November 12, 1828.

[The following article, with some slight modifications, originally appeared in 'The Itinerant, or Wesleyan Methodist Visiter.' It is understood to be the production of an able local minister, and tends to show the sentiments of our highly esteemed brethren of that class, and how cordially they agree with the itinerant ministry, in the general principles of our ecclesiastical polity. That there may be perhaps some individual exceptions, does not at all invalidate the justness of this remark in its general application. On the contrary, if they be but exceptions, as we are satisfied they are, and very scarce ones too, they establish the justness of the general observation. We speak of course only in so far as our knowledge extends, and express our belief according to the best of this knowledge. Greater unanimity than *now* exists, in doctrines, discipline, and general polity, in the Methodist Episcopal Church,—unanimity among all the orders, both of itinerant and local ministers, and also of the official and private members generally, with more of the blessing and dew of Heaven on all our union and labours, we believe, does not exist in any other church whatever. This opinion is not hazarded rashly, nor without such means and sources of information as we believe amply sufficient for its full justification. And when we consider the great extent of our work, embracing the vast field of the United States and Territories, the hundreds of thousands within our communion, and the variety and admitted delicacy of some sectional peculiarities and interests, (some of which are alluded to in the article which follows,) we ought rather to bless and praise God for the delightful and cheering harmony which now so extensively prevails among us, than to wonder at the lowering elements which,

in some insulated portions of our extended field, presented lately an afflicting aspect, threatening to overcloud and mar our happy state and prospects.—But, with the spouse in the Canticles, we trust we can now as truly as joyfully say,—‘Lo the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land: the fig tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines with the tender grape give a good smell.’—Our ‘Beloved’ is ours, and we are His! O that He may let us see *His* countenance, and hear *His* voice; for sweet is His voice, and His countenance is comely.]

‘It is observed in the history of innovation, that the indirect and unforeseen consequences of every great change of an existing system, are more numerous and extensive than those which had been seen and calculated upon, whether by those who advocated, or those who opposed the alteration.

WALTER SCOTT.’

THE right of any body of Christians to form a constitution, and establish themselves as a separate and distinct sect, provided they keep within the limits prescribed in the great charter of our Christian privileges contained in the Holy Scriptures, we will not attempt to controvert. And although separation from the fellowship of a church, which we have voluntarily joined, is not a light matter, yet, whenever any number of Christians conscientiously believe that by such a secession they will be able to do more for the glory of God and the salvation of themselves and others, than they can effect by retaining their membership in the church to which they belong, they are bound to secede. In doing this, however, they ought to be careful to give no unnecessary offence to others. They are bound in Christian charity to allow as much honesty of purpose, and uprightness of intention, to the brethren from whom they separate, as they claim for themselves. If, conscious of their own superior endowments, they fear not to enter upon a course of experiments in church government, they should feel tenderly for those, who, thinking more humbly of themselves, prefer the safer path of experience. In short, they should be contented with the flattering prospects which are held out to them in a system contrived by their own superior wisdom, and with having offered the benefits of their talents to those whom they leave behind. They have no right to rail at others, much less to misrepresent to the world both their conduct and character.

Allowing then all that the seceders from our church claim for themselves, as respects the right of separating from our communion, we should not have deemed it proper to animadvert upon the defects of their new system, had they not prefaced it with a string of declarations and slanderous denunciations against us, as false and unfounded as they are uncharitable. In looking over the long list of ‘whereases,’ by which the articles alluded to are prefaced,

we do not find a single fact alleged, or a single motive assigned, in reference to the church they were about to leave, which is not either wholly unfounded, or grossly misrepresented.

Neither the General Conference nor the Annual Conferences have ever claimed a divine right to legislate for the church, as is asserted by this preamble. On the contrary, the General Conference, at its last session, formally and explicitly disavowed any claim of right to *legislate* for the church, in the proper and strict sense of that term. They avow that the laws for the government of Christians have been made by the great Head of the church himself. It therefore only remains for his ministry to preach his gospel,—to explain and enforce both its doctrines and discipline, and to adopt such prudential rules and regulations as may best enable them to discharge these duties. Neither is it true that any have been expelled from our church for their opinions upon church government, or for communicating those opinions to others either by writing or speaking. It is remarkable too, that the rules of discipline under which those who have been expelled were charged, are adopted into the new code; and are thereby sanctioned by the free and voluntary act of those who heretofore complained of them as so grievously oppressive.

Leaving for the present, however, the further consideration of this extraordinary preamble, we shall hasten to review the articles which it introduces; and inquire what are the benefits which the Church would have derived from the adoption of the innovations proposed by our disaffected brethren; or rather, what are the evils into which we should have plunged, had we yielded to the clamour and turbulence with which their theories and projects were urged upon us. It is but fair to infer, that what has been done by the separatists for themselves, is the same which they desired we should have done for them; and that the constitution and form of government which they, in their congregated wisdom, have made, would have constituted the economy of the Methodist Church, had it been modelled according to their wishes. Indeed, we are told so by the Convention itself in their preamble; for we are informed, that ‘they will now of necessity meet the demand which has been so often made by their opponents, to exhibit a plan explanatory of the changes which they desire.’

We must, therefore, in reviewing these conventional articles, or new church constitution, consider its provisions in their application to the Methodist Episcopal Church, and inquire how far we acted wisely in resisting the strenuous endeavours of our disaffected brethren to change the fundamental principles of our economy. And we rejoice that we have at length the opportunity, so long denied, of ascertaining precisely the extent of the revolution from which we have escaped.

The first article recognises, as part of the economy of the new association, all that belongs to our church polity, ‘except where

contravened by some other article.' The separatists were thus saved from all the necessity of settling their articles of religion and their moral discipline, and even much that pertains to its administration. They are not now prepared, we apprehend, to estimate the obligations they owe to those who have saved them from the difficulties which would have grown out of the settlement of such matters. If, however, we estimate the difficulties of erecting an entire new building by the total failure to mend any part of the old one, after all the pains the projectors have taken, we may have perhaps some faint conceptions of the magnitude of the undertaking.

Before we proceed to a regular review of the articles, we beg leave to introduce one of them, which, as a sweeping provision covering all the rest, we cannot postpone; because it gives a peculiar cast of character to the whole business of reform, as contemplated by the seceders. It is the only article in which an attempt is made to innovate upon the moral discipline of our church; and from the gross impropriety both in principle and tendency of this one, we are thankful that *it is* the only one. We allude to the fifteenth article,—which reads in the latest edition as follows:—

'Nothing contained in these articles shall be so construed as to interfere with the right of property belonging to any member of this association, as recognised by the laws of the state, within the limits of which the member may reside.'

By this article of the new constitution the church is precluded from exercising any control over its members, in any matter relating to property, provided it be *legally* vested in them. No matter how *unjustly* one member may retain the property of another, if he be legally protected in doing so; the aggrieved member can have no redress before the church judicatories; and the injustice, however manifest to all men, may be persisted in without incurring a forfeiture of church membership or Christian privileges.

Cases innumerable may be supposed by our readers, in which this article would compel the church to sanction fraud and injustice; and continue in her communion men who would be deemed dishonest, not only at the tribunal of Christian morality, but by the common honesty of the world. Civil laws can only provide for the general application of the rules of justice, even where they are intended to be most rigorously just: it is not possible to provide against all the advantages which the artifices of men may take of a law, which, though good and wholesome in its general provisions, may be unjust and iniquitous in its application to individual cases. Thus it may be absolutely necessary that the laws of the state should bar, by a statute of limitation, the recovery of claims which the claimant has neglected to demand for a certain term of years. Not that a debt can be cancelled by the debtor's having avoided the payment of it for any term of years whatever; but the law presumes the payment from the neglect of the creditor to prosecute the claim, and the state has an unquestionable right to say what shall be

received in courts of judicature as evidence of the payment of a debt. It is easy to see what would be the consequences of abolishing the statute of limitation. Every man would be compelled to preserve his receipts with perpetual vigilance, and even to provide for their perpetuation throughout all successive generations, lest in some future age claims should be revived after the evidence of their liquidation was lost. But notwithstanding the necessity and general equity of such laws, it is obvious that the most unjust advantages may be taken under their provisions, of the simplicity, the negligence, or even of the benevolence and lenity of creditors. He who avails himself of such means, to avoid the payment of a just claim, of whatever standing, is not only dishonest, but is an enemy of social order,—perverting the very institutions which were intended to promote and secure the ends of justice, to the purposes of fraud. Under the article we have quoted, it will be seen that the judicatories of the new Church are prohibited from interfering with any rights of property belonging to their members, if such rights be recognised by the laws of the state in which they may reside. Their members are therefore at liberty to plead the statute of limitation, in bar of any claim, however just, without thereby incurring a forfeiture of membership, or even bringing upon themselves the censure of the Church!

Again, by this article, a member may hold and possess any species of property, however inconsistent with good morals the participation in such property may be. He may not be allowed to attend theatrical exhibitions, but he may hold as many shares of theatre stock as he pleases. He may not play at billiards, but he may own a billiard table, and let it out to others,—provided he take out a license according to law. He may not be a privateersman, but he may hold ‘a right of property’ in the vessel employed in privateering. In short, it would be endless to enumerate the instances in which a member of the new association might avail himself of this rule to retain his membership, while violating the most obvious precepts of Christian obligation.

We have been told, by a member of the Convention, that the article we have been noticing was intended to apply exclusively to the right of property in slaves. It will nevertheless be seen, by looking at the rule itself, that it does, in fact, apply to any species of property whatever; and being a constitutional article, it is a part of the paramount law of the community who have enacted it. No individual part of the Church can repeal, alter, or modify its provisions. It must continue in force, whatever be the mischief it may occasion, until repealed by some subsequent General Convention.

But if it be true that the article was intended to prohibit, by a constitutional provision, any interference, on the part of the annual conferences, with the right of the members to hold or to traffic in slaves, we confess we regret it more than any of the many errors into which the Convention have fallen. For the credit of our com-

mon profession, we would rather that we were allowed to attribute the manifest impropriety of the article to an oversight in the makers of it,—to hurry or inadvertency,—or to any thing rather than a direct intention to acknowledge ‘a right of property in human souls.’ Posterity will scarcely believe it possible, that a Christian church, organizing itself for the first time in the enlightened era of the nineteenth century, commenced by sacrificing to avarice and worldly prudence, a primary precept of Christianity, ‘Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, that do ye also unto them ; for this is the law and the prophets.’ That they compromised with the world by surrendering to them a *right* to hold their fellow beings in involuntary slavery ;—having an arbitrary control over them, which the Almighty himself does not exercise over the creatures he has made : for he *compels* no man to do either good or evil. We could wish, not only for the sake of our common profession, but for the sake of the violated rights of humanity, that our brethren had not done this thing : that they had not conceded it as a right to their members, not only to hold slaves, but to engage in the horrid traffic in human beings, which disgraces our country.

But although we deny that there is any Scripture rule to warrant, or other rule of moral justice, to authorize the practice of slavery as it exists in this country ; yet we are ready to concede that in our efforts to procure the emancipation of slaves, and in enforcing it by church discipline, much circumspection and prudence ought to be used. We should be careful to keep in view that the great end of the gospel is to better the condition of man in this world, and to prepare him for happiness in the next. Certain states of the Union have put it out of the power of their citizens to *free* their slaves. They may indeed discharge them from their service, and disclaim all right to hold them in servitude, but they do not thereby make them free ; as the law allows, perhaps makes it obligatory on others to enslave them. The condition of the slave would certainly not be bettered by exchanging the service of one who fears God, for that of one who does not feel the force of religious obligation. Under such circumstances, our Church, although she fearlessly avows her opposition to the principle, is nevertheless compelled to permit the practice of slavery among her members ; still, however, asserting the right, and exercising the authority, of meliorating the condition of the slaves who may be held by them. If enough has not been done upon this subject, where the laws of the state allow more, it is to be regretted, and it must be admitted, that no subject requires more wisdom and caution in the exercise of ecclesiastical discipline, than the one to which we have referred. But the seceders from our Church have, by acknowledging a *right of property* in slaves, and forbidding any interference with such rights, given up the *principle* upon which any future efforts might be based to do away the evil. They have done more. They have authorized the traffic in slaves to any extent ; and under this article of their

constitution, the cruel and relentless slave trader may not only put Christianity to the blush, but outrage the common feelings of the community, by presenting himself at their communion table. Nay, preachers and people may engage in the trade, without let or hinderance; since no article of their constitution is to be so construed, as to interfere with their rights of property in slaves. We do not wonder that the intention of this article was concealed. It would not have done to announce its true design, by specially confining it to 'rights of property in slaves;' because the feelings of many who have joined in the great work of reform, would have revolted at such a direct justification of practices they had always looked upon as immoral. The specification, however, ought to have been made, notwithstanding its odiousness, because in the endeavour to cover the intention of the article, the Convention has, as we have shown above, opened the door to other evils, formidable both in number and magnitude.

When the printed edition of the articles first appeared, the words 'of property belonging to' were not found in the fifteenth article. The rule therefore permitted the members of the association to *do* as well as to possess whatever the law of the state authorized. Upon pointing out the dangerous license which this article afforded to any member of the association who was inclined to avail himself of it, one of the members informed us that nothing more was intended by it than to secure to the members the liberty of speech and of the press. The article however soon became a common topic of conversation, and although the Convention had broken up, and most of the members had gone home, the article was revised, and a new edition issued, making it read as we have quoted it. We have been told that the error arose from an omission of the transcriber. The correction however is fatal to the 'liberty of speech and of the press,' as it leaves the 'odious gag law' in our discipline, which forbids the sowing dissensions, by inveighing or unchristian railing, among those which were adopted by the Convention in their first article. Alas for the infirmities and inconsistencies of poor human nature—our would-be reformers have justified slavery, and forbid all interference with their right to traffic in human flesh, while their vociferations about liberty and equality were yet sounding in our ears, and adopted 'a gag law,' while they were complaining of the restrictions their brethren had imposed upon the liberty, or rather the licentiousness, of speech and of the press!

It is entirely indifferent how the framers of the article we have been reviewing may attempt to explain or modify it. The principle upon which it is founded is totally, *radically* wrong, and therefore no modification of it can make it right. It is an attempt to lower the standard of Christian morals to the weakness and imperfection of human legislation. To make the obligations of Christian duty succumb to human authority. The moral precepts by which Christians are to be governed are enacted by infinite wisdom and purity,

and are enforced by higher and holier sanctions than human laws. They admit of no evasion, nor authorize any compromise with either the spirit or practice of the world. We must obey God rather than man. The article is therefore totally improper in any system of Christian discipline or ecclesiastical government.

We shall now proceed to take up the articles in regular succession; and are certain to make two things very evident.—First, that it is much easier to find fault with our church government than to improve upon its provisions; and secondly, that if it were true, as has been charged, that our people are under the arbitrary domination of the travelling preachers,—the new church only presents a choice of evils,—the liberty of transferring our allegiance from itinerant to local preachers.

We have shown the result of the only effort which the Conventionalists made to innovate upon our *moral* discipline, and from the solitary sample we have exhibited, we think it will not be regretted by their best friends that they did not proceed farther. Many charitable people, we understand, have been led to suppose that the consequences of the rule alluded to, in reference to slavery, were not foreseen by the framers of it. We assure them, however, that the rule was adopted solely in view of that subject, and for this we have the authority of some of the framers of the constitution themselves. We are, however, led to hope that many of the other evils growing out of its adoption, were not foreseen, notwithstanding the boasted talents of the Conventionalists, otherwise, we charitably hope, the rule would have been restricted to the right of property in slaves, however desirable it might have been to conceal this deformity. We shall now inquire whether this assembly of reformers were better versed in the science of church government than in morals.

The first two articles read, in the *revised* edition, as follows:—

‘I. The articles of religion, general rules, means of grace, moral discipline, rites and ceremonies of the Methodist Episcopal Church, are hereby declared to be the rules of faith and practice for those societies which may unite in this association; *and the mode of administering the same is hereby adopted, except where contravened by some other article.*’

‘II. Each society, or church, shall have the sole power to admit serious persons into full membership, and to regulate its own temporal concerns, in accordance with these articles. The stewards to be elected by the male members, over the age of twenty-one years, and the leaders by the respective classes annually.’

Our readers will bear in mind what we have apprized them of, namely, that we intend to inquire into the fitness and propriety of the new constitution, as a substitute for our present economy. We should have had nothing to do with the polity of the separatists, if they had not introduced it by a preamble complaining bitterly of the Methodists for not having acceded to their wishes, in reference

to the innovations they proposed to make upon our government and discipline. The articles profess, moreover, 'to exhibit a plan explanatory of the changes they desire,' in order to 'meet the demand which has been often made by their opponents;' and as this is the first 'plan' they have ever condescended to give us, we are for the first time indulged with an opportunity of examining the merits of the 'reform,' for which they have so long and so urgently contended.

We hope, therefore, we shall not be thought to be querulously interfering with the Convention, about the order and arrangement of their own household affairs. When folks go to housekeeping, they may be safely permitted to manage their affairs in their own way. We are only desirous to justify ourselves for having refused to permit them to alter our arrangements, and to model them according to their fashion, in despite of the wishes of the great body of our people. We wish to show that under the regulations proposed in the new 'plan,' we could not keep house at all; and, therefore, were not to blame for rejecting their counsel, or resisting the vehement demands with which they urged upon us their projects of reform.

The change proposed by the second article, in the mode of admitting members into the church, we deem inexpedient for several reasons. We have known no society or church, in which all the members were qualified to decide in such matters, in all cases. A large majority of many societies will often be found to consist of young members, whose knowledge of the varieties of human character is necessarily very limited. It cannot be expected of such, that their religious zeal and fervour should be sufficiently attempered by the maturity of Christian experience or Christian knowledge. With such nothing would be required of a candidate but his own professions, provided they were accompanied with the outward manifestation of the same ardour of feeling by which they themselves were animated. The caution and prudence of the senior and more deeply experienced members, would be received as the dictates of mere worldly policy, and would be overruled accordingly. The reception of the applicant would have to be decided by votes, not *weighed*, but *counted*. The admission of the candidate would depend upon other contingencies than that of real fitness; and thus persons would often be introduced into the fellowship of the church through the hasty and inconsiderate zeal of the junior members, whose religious concern being the fugitive effect of suddenly excited feeling, would evaporate in an ebullition of passion, and leave them with no fixed and abiding principles of action. And as such principles alone can sustain a religious and self denying Christian character, the Church, in all such cases, would suffer in all her members the obloquy and reproach of individual delinquency.

It will, perhaps, be answered, that this odium has been often incurred under the present regulations of our church, and this will

be readily admitted ; but the allegation, so far from weakening, really strengthens our objections to the new plan. If under an economy where the applicant must pass the ordeal of frequent examination in class meeting, and finally be admitted by the pastor, upon his own knowledge of the candidate, and upon the recommendation of the class leader, whose duty it is to examine him freely and fully upon the subjects of Christian experience and practice, for at least six months,—if, we say, under such restrictions improper persons still find their way into our communion, what would be the consequences of making their admission depend upon the acclamation of a whole society ? A society where men and women, young and old, and even children, should have an equal right of suffrage ?

The foregoing remarks are made upon the presumption that the members, individually and collectively, intend to do right. But it is easy to conceive a state of things, in which, under the new plan, the admission of partisans, reputed to be 'serious persons,' *may greatly subserve the purposes of a party in the society*, in respect to some of the many elections provided for in the new constitution. If an election of stewards, leaders, or delegates to the Annual Conference, or General Conference, be a contested matter in the society, it may become the temporary interest of the different parties to procure the admission of auxiliaries, whether they be fit associates in a religious community or not. In such cases, what strife and contention would be engendered, and what schisms would be created, by the disappointed ambition of rival candidates, when they failed to procure the admission of their friends and supporters.

But this is not all. The gospel, in its renovating efficacy, often reaches the most degraded casts of society, especially in our cities. If such, under the influence of the most contrite feelings, become applicants for admission into the Church, it will be necessary, under the new constitution, that the character of the applicant should be canvassed before the whole body, when, of course, those who object to the admission, will have a right to state their objections, and expose the whole of a character over which both Christian charity and prudence would desire to cast a veil. The applicant may be rejected, and the very next day the whole town would know both the rejection and the reasons for it. If by the 'church' be meant a class, then the applicant, if he has occupied a degraded rank in society, may apply to a class, which, under the authority to refuse admission to any whom they deem less honorable than themselves, may be abundantly too genteel to admit an outcast. Their rejection fixes a mark of reprobation upon him, and he must go without the benefit of Christian fellowship, until he can find a class composed of those who have been taken from a walk of life as humble as his own.

Under our regulations, the preacher in charge admits upon trial,

and after a probation of six months, if the class leader, whose business it is to make himself acquainted with the moral character and Christian experience of the candidate, be free to recommend him as one who continues to evidence his desire of salvation by an upright life and Christian conversation, he is admitted into full membership. In the country, where the candidate is generally known, no other precautions are necessary to prevent impositions; but in cities, the practice is, for the preacher to bring the application before the leaders' meeting, and if no proper objection be urged, the preacher announces the admission at the next love feast. In this process there is no unnecessary exposure of faults or failings, even in reference to those who are not received into the Church. The select body of leaders alone hear the objections, and if any injury is done to the reputation of those who have been refused admission, it is known only to those, whose official standing in the Church is a guarantee for their prudence.

Upon the whole, we think the impartial reader, who carefully compares the new plan of admitting members into the church, with that which we have so long practised, will agree with us, that it is much easier to innovate than to reform. The separatists will find, after their scheme shall have been as long subjected to the infallible test of experience as ours has been, that it was not without reason that we hesitated to enter with them the regions of fancy and speculation. We are satisfied yet to adapt our system of government and discipline to men as *they are*, and as they ever have been. It will be time enough to conform them to the occasions and requirements of men as they *should be*, after so desirable a change shall have passed upon human nature.

The innovation upon which we have been commenting, is not, at least in its principle, a novel pretension in Methodism. In the notes upon our discipline, written at the request of the General Conference, by Dr. Coke and Bishop Asbury, the subject is placed in a clear light. The edition of the Discipline which contained this commentary, is now out of print, and we presume that to most of our readers the weighty arguments and forcible observations of those apostolic men and fathers of American Methodism, will be as new as they are useful. We are entirely free to own, that notwithstanding the cruel and unjust aspersions which have been made upon the characters of Dr. Coke and Bishop Asbury, our veneration for their memories remains unabated. Their zeal for the cause of truth and righteousness, their entire devotion of time, talents, and property, to the great work of evangelizing the world, which they kept steadily in view, never losing sight of it for a moment, and to which object they sacrificed every personal consideration of comfort and convenience, assures us of their sincerity; while their acknowledged talents, their deep piety, and long and varied experience, will enforce their opinions and their advice upon the Methodists, in every succeeding generation, with sanctions that

carry conviction at once to the understanding and the heart. The bishops in their commentary, pages 74-76, say,

'HE [the preacher in charge] is also to receive members upon trial, and into society, according to the form of Discipline. If this authority were invested in the society, or any part of it, the great work of revival would soon be at an end. A very remarkable proof of this was given several years ago, by a society in Europe. Many of the leading members of that society were exceedingly importunate to have the whole government of their society invested in a meeting composed of the principal preacher, and a number of *lay elders* and *lay deacons*, as they termed them. At last the preacher who had the oversight of the circuit was prevailed upon, through their incessant importunity, to comply with their request. He accordingly nominated all the *leaders* and *stewards*, as lay elders and lay deacons, with the desired powers. But alas! what was the consequence? The great revival which was then in that society and congregation, was soon extinguished. Poor sinners, newly awakened, were flocking into the church of God as doves to their windows. But now, the wisdom and prudence of the *new court* kept them at a distance, till they had given full proof of their repentance. "If their convictions be sincere," said they, "they will not withdraw themselves from the preaching of the word on account of our caution; they themselves will see the propriety of our conduct." Thus, whilst the fervent preacher was one hour declaring the willingness of Christ immediately to receive the returning sinners, the wisdom of the lay elders and lay deacons would the next hour reject them even from being received upon trial, unless they had been before *painted sepulchres, inwardly full of dead men's bones and rottenness*. The preacher who had the charge of the circuit nearly broke his heart, to see the precious souls which God had given him, kept at a distance from him, and thrown back again upon the wide world by the *prudent lay elders and deacons*. However, at his earnest entreaty, he was removed into another circuit by the conference, under whose control he acted, to enjoy the blessings of the *Methodist economy*. The revival of the work of God was soon extinguished; and the society, from being one of the most lively, became one of the most languid in Europe.

It is true, that on great revivals, the spiritually halt, and blind, and lame, will press in crowds into the church of God; and they are welcome to all that we can do for their invaluable souls, till they prove unfaithful to convincing or converting grace. And we will not throw back their souls on the wicked world, whilst groaning under the burden of sin, because many on the trial quench their convictions, or perhaps were hypocritical from the beginning. We would sooner go again into the highways and hedges, and form new societies as at first, than we would give up a privilege so essential to the ministerial office and to the revival of the work of God.

The master of the house [God] said to his servant, "Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and *bring in hither* the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind. And the servant said, Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room."

He obeys his God, without asking permission of any society, whether he should obey him or not. "And the Lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and *compel them to come in*, that *my house* may be filled," Luke xiv, 21-23. The servant answers not to his God, I will comply with thy command as far as my society, or my leaders and stewards, will permit me. Again, the Lord says to Ezekiel, chap. xxxiv, 1-10, "Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel, prophesy, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God unto the shepherds, Wo be to the shepherds of Israel—the diseased have ye not strengthened, neither have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye bound up that which was broken, *neither have ye brought again that which was driven away, neither have ye sought that which was lost*. And they were scattered, because there is no shepherd: and they became meat to all the beasts of the field, when they were scattered.—Therefore, ye shepherds, hear the word of the Lord; As I live, saith the Lord God, surely because my flock became a prey, and my flock became meat to every beast of the field, because there was no shepherd, neither did my shepherds search for my flock.—Therefore, O ye shepherds, hear the word of the Lord; Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I am against the shepherds, and I WILL REQUIRE MY FLOCK AT THEIR HAND, and cause them to cease from feeding the flock," &c. Now, what pastors, called and owned of God, would take upon themselves this awful responsibility, if others could refuse to their spiritual children the grand external privilege of the gospel, or admit among them the most improper persons to mix with and corrupt them? Truly, whatever the pastors of other churches may do, we trust that ours will never put themselves under so dreadful a bondage. It is in vain to say, that others may be as tender and cautious as *the pastors*: for *the pastors* are the persons responsible to God, and, therefore, should by no means be thus fettered in their pastoral care. And those who are desirous to wrest out of the hands of ministers [pastors] this important part of their duty, should rather go out themselves to the highways and hedges, and preach the everlasting gospel, or be contented with their present providential situation.'

We have noticed that part of the second article which relates to the mode of admitting members into the Associated Methodist Churches, and have shown that the innovation would be exceedingly dangerous to us, if ingrafted upon our economy. We shall now add some remarks upon the change made by this article in the conditions of membership. In the general rules of our society, it is required of those who enter our communion, that 'they have a desire to flee from the wrath to come, and to be saved from their sins;' and that they continue to manifest their desire of salvation by a life and conversation conformable to this desire. And then follows a particular specification of gospel requisitions, which are deemed by the church as necessarily written by the Holy Spirit upon every truly awakened heart. These general rules have been adopted by the Convention, except where contravened by the articles of association; and among those which are so contravened, we

find the conditions of admission into the church. The second article says, 'Each society or church shall have the sole power to admit *serious persons* into full membership;' so that the only demand made of those who apply for admission, is, that they be 'serious persons,'—a demand so indefinite that we do not know its precise boundaries, but we are very sure that it will include many classes of 'persons' who have not even 'the form of godliness,' much less seeking the power of it. It will, however, afford our opponents an advantage over us, by inducing numbers to enter their pale who are not prepared to comply with the terms upon which we receive members. It is now no longer a reproach to be a member of a Christian church; it has even become reputable to be so; and those who desire church membership from worldly motives, will naturally seek a church which requires nothing more of them than that they should have the reputation of being 'serious persons.' The new condition of membership is in perfect keeping with the fifteenth article. The slave dealer, however unrelentingly he drives his trade,—the man who dishonestly pleads the act of limitation to avoid the payment of a just debt,—and the avaricious wretch whose bowels of compassion are not moved while he strips his brother of his bed, and casts him into prison, may, nevertheless, be a very 'serious person.' In short, the change is one very well calculated to catch those who are willing enough to acquire the reputation of being Christians, provided it can be had without the sacrifices which Christianity requires. To this advantage, if indeed it be one, our opponents are welcome. But Methodism will cease to be a blessing to the world, whenever the Methodists receive and retain among them those who are too rich, too honorable, or too full of worldly wisdom, to submit to the discipline of the Church. Both our prosperity and usefulness depend upon our steadfastly adhering to our original conditions of membership,—'a desire to flee from the wrath to come, and to be saved from their sins;' and the giving evidence of their desire of salvation, by an upright walk and a Christian conversation, as is more fully expressed in our general rules.

The second article furthermore provides, that 'the stewards shall be elected by the male members over the age of twenty-one years; and the leaders by the respective classes annually.'*

With respect to the election of stewards by the members, under certain modifications of the privilege, we confess we do not see so great objections; and under our economy they are elected

* There is something mysterious connected with this word, 'annually,' as it appears in the *revised* edition of the Conventional Articles. It is not to be found appended to the second article in the *first* edition, nor does it appear in the articles as published in the 'Mutual Rights,' although the paper containing them was issued subsequently to the revised edition published in a pamphlet form. It will not be expected of us to account for this fact. Our readers are quite as well qualified to do so as we are.

by the quarterly meeting conference, composed, for the most part, of laymen and local preachers. The preacher in charge, however, has the nomination, and when it is considered, that upon the faithfulness and zealous endeavours of the stewards, particularly on the circuits, the preacher's support chiefly depends, it will not be thought unreasonable that he should have such a participation in the appointment of these officers. This is the rather necessary, because, while in office, the stewards are no way amenable to the pastor, for the discharge of their official duties ; but are accountable only to the conference which elects them.

But under the new economy the stewards are not made accountable any where for their official conduct. They are not, like the class leaders, to be elected *annually*, and in the nature and fitness of things can only be responsible to their constituents, while the constitution provides no way in which these constituents can bring them to account for any official delinquency, except it amount to such immorality as would deprive them of church membership. How strange that men, making such high pretensions as reformers, should commit such egregious blunders in legislation !

Concerning the new mode of appointing class leaders, we have much to say, and much which it greatly interests the members of our church deeply to reflect upon. This is one of the innovations of which we have been most afraid from the beginning. It is among those which are the most plausible in theory, but the most dangerous in practice, of all the changes which have been proposed in our economy ; and its introduction would require little else to destroy our whole system of itinerant ministration, and make the Methodists a curse rather than a blessing to the Christian world.

Of all the institutions of Methodism, none, except the itinerant ministry itself, is of half the importance, or has had half the effect in promoting the cause of religion, as class meeting. It is not easy for the members or ministry of other communions to appreciate the value of class meetings to us ; because they are not necessarily required by those who are provided with a settled ministry. The minister who resides permanently among his flock, can in various ways make himself acquainted with his communicants, and personally give the particular instruction, reproof, or exhortations, which may be suitable to their individual cases. His personal intercourse with his charge will, if he be anxious to make the inquiry, bring him acquainted with the religious standing of every individual whom the Great Shepherd has placed under his care ; and he may find the suitable time and place for the necessary inquiries and advice. But to an itinerant minister this is impossible. So much of his time is occupied in travelling and preaching, that his transient sojourn at any one place, does not afford him time to become personally acquainted with a great proportion of his flock, much less to have that full and unreserved communication with them individually, which would enable him to ascertain their religious state, and to give the reli-

gious instruction which their particular circumstances severally require. To supply this lack of service, our class leaders come in aid of the travelling preachers. They are, in fact, auxiliaries to the pastors of the Church, watching over the souls of their brethren, and leading them, both by precept and example, to work out their salvation. It is requisite that they be men of irreproachable character, of deep piety, and much experience. Residing among the members of his class, the leader necessarily becomes acquainted with their deportment in society, and from their connexions and occupations in life, can infer the peculiar temptations to which they are liable. He is therefore prepared to guard them, by suitable admonitions, against the temptations which may most easily beset them, and to give them advice and encouragement, under circumstances of peculiar trial. Through the class leaders, the itinerant pastor, whose services are extended over a wide field of labour, becomes acquainted with the state of the society, and is directed to such as particularly require his care, either from affliction of body or mind; and also such, as, walking disorderly, require to be dealt with according to the directions of Discipline. Without these agents, our great missionary work could not be carried on. Those who are gathered into the fold of Christ, by the preaching of the word, would be mostly lost for the want of pastoral care. The ministry would know little or nothing of the religious state of the membership, and the communion of the Church would become a by-word, and a reproach, even among the men of the world.

The appointment of the class leaders, so necessary to the pastors in fulfilling the duties imposed by their commission to feed the flock of Christ, has been, of course, given to the preachers in charge of circuits and stations, who are chiefly responsible to God for the souls committed to their care. To take from them this prerogative, would be to compel them to commit the souls whom God had given them for their hire, to the keeping of those whose gifts and qualifications they deemed inadequate to the trust, and over whom they could exercise no control, however the societies might decline in spirituality through their negligence or incapacity. It is true that a preacher recently come to the charge of a circuit or station, may not be able, alone and unaided, to select the most proper person to fill a vacancy which may have happened among the class leaders; nor will he pretend to do so. He can always find senior brethren, stewards, local preachers, &c, to advise with upon such an occasion; and as he can labour under no temptation to make an improper selection designedly, he will not fail to resort to the best counsel he can find. And it is a remarkable fact in the history of our church, that the members are very much attached to their class leaders, each preferring their own, however he may be excelled by others in talents or gifts. In fact, the cementing influence of these little spiritual associations, can only be known to those who have enjoyed them, and have entered into their spirituality. In these

little meetings, the soul is at once softened by sympathy, and invigorated by example; is melted into tenderness by those who mourn their unfaithfulness, while the experience of those who are strong in faith encourages the weak to redouble their diligence, and to 'press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.' They are mutually comforted by their mutual faith. No worldly motives, no temporary purposes, can have any influence here. Shut out from the world and its anxious cares, they here think and speak only of the concerns of their souls. The leader, possessing the confidence and love of the members, speaks freely and fully to the case of each; reproving, exhorting, and comforting, as the case may be, with all long suffering and kindness. While the law of love governs his heart, he is not afraid to probe to the bottom every wound, and however searching his inquiries, and however close his advice, it is received in a corresponding spirit; and the man must be incorrigible who is not benefited by such religious fellowship and communion.

Into these spiritual associations, those soul-cementing little bands, it is proposed by the new system of government to introduce the demon of discord, by an annually contested election for class leaders. Every class is to be converted into an arena for contending partisans, and it requires little sagacity, and less Christian experience, to anticipate the result. We object to the innovation,

1. Because those best fitted by their piety, would not be candidates in such a contest. The most pious are always the most retiring. They who are best acquainted with their own hearts, will always be best apprized of their own weaknesses and infirmities, and will have the humblest opinion of their gifts. They will, therefore, gladly decline the responsibilities, for which true humility will always suggest they are incompetent; and the field will be left open for the forward and the aspiring,—as unfit, as they are anxious, to acquire preëminence in the church. We have never yet seen a man who considered himself eminently qualified for the office of a class leader, who was really fit for it; and few who have been forward to enter into the ministry, but have given melancholy proof that they had run before they were sent.

This is a fact that developed itself very early in our Church, and perhaps in most other churches. It has its origin in the very constitution of human nature. The Rev. Charles Wesley was well apprized of this truth, and has expressed it in his peculiarly pointed manner:—

‘How ready HE is to go,
Whom God has never sent;
How cautious, diffident, and slow,
His chosen instrument.’

2. In the competition for class leaders, each class will necessarily be divided, and it cannot fail to happen that some warmth, if not bitterness of spirit, will be created. The person elected will

come to the discharge of his very delicate duties, with the certainty that a minority of the class were opposed to his election. Will he be under no temptation to think less favorably of his opponents than of his supporters? It would be requiring more strength of mind than usually pertains to men, however good they may be, to suppose them not susceptible of this bias. But if he could be superior to such weakness, is it to be expected of all, or even most of the minority, that they will be equally free from such influences? And if not, how will they receive the close dealing which a class leader is bound to use with those who are placed under his care? When, in the strict discharge of his official duty, he pointed out any thing which he judged blameable in their deportment, nothing is more certain than that some would attribute it to the feelings which had arisen in the mind of the leader towards them, in consequence of the part they had taken in the previous election. How impenetrable must such an opinion render them to the rebuke or even the advice of the leader?

3. In the city stations female classes meet separately; and how it will comport with prudence or discretion to agitate these with annual elections for leaders, we submit to the serious consideration of our brethren; especially, as they cannot have the acquaintance with the candidates, and with their deportment in the world, which might govern the *male* electors in their choice. But in some, nay, many of the classes, a majority of the members, male and female, are too young, and have too little experience, to be qualified to judge properly of the qualifications which fit a man for the important duties of a leader. With such persons, a good singer, with zeal and fervour, and a competent store of camp meeting songs, would have an incalculable advantage in the election. The sobered feelings of the veteran, war-worn Christian,—his prudent counsels and wise cautionary advice, though essentially necessary to the young converts, might be far less to their taste, than the enthusiastic exercises of those whose feelings are less under the control of an enlightened understanding and well disciplined judgment. We have known men in our day, who, though unstable as water, and not at all exemplary in their deportment before the world, yet, from the warmth of their public exercises, and an unaccountable ability to waken up such feelings in others, would have outpolled, in a class of young people, the best men and the best class leaders in the connexion. What would become of the Church, if the instruction and discipline of our young members were committed to such leaders it is easy to foretel, without the spirit of prophecy.

4. Suppose it should happen, as it has happened, that the majority of a class and the leader too, become lukewarm in religion, a negligence of duty and a manifest want of spirituality pervading the whole,—the leader neglects the class, and the class neglect to assemble themselves together in their class room. The few who retain their steadfastness mourn over the declension, but have no

power to remedy the evil. The majority love to have it so,—they love to enjoy the society of the vain and the thoughtless, and to enter into those frivolous amusements in which their former spiritual enjoyments have been dissipated and lost. The leader sees no harm in such *innocent* trifling, and yet, neither the one nor the other wish to forfeit their membership, because there is some degree of obloquy attached to expulsion. The heart of the pastor may bleed in vain over these thoughtless sheep, whose souls God had committed to his care, but he has no remedy. A faithful, spiritual leader, might yet reclaim them, but the blind have the selection of their guide, and prefer one who will indulge them, and who is little less, or perhaps more, blinded than themselves. The pastor must mourn in silence, or remonstrate in vain. The ruin is inevitable. The leader and his class ultimately backslide entirely, both in heart and in life, and cause a common reproach, merely because the pastors of the Church, together with the senior part of the membership, have no power to interfere.

The innovation is an absurdity, because it proposes to take from the itinerant ministry the choice and appointment of those agents, through whom only they can fulfil their pastoral duties to the Church, and gives no power to change them, however unfit they may be found to answer the purposes of their appointment; and it is moreover founded in the absurd supposition, that all who enter our Church, come into it fully prepared to judge of the qualifications necessary to those who are to be charged with their instruction, in all the doctrines and duties of holiness.

5. The innovation would not effect what it proposes, even were the evils which it brings with it less than we estimate them. It proposes to give each member the privilege of meeting with the leader of his choice; but as every class would be more or less divided in the election, a part must necessarily meet under a leader whom they have not only not chosen, but whom they have rejected. Under the present system, the members have at least an opportunity of selecting a leader from among those who have been constituted such; and as they have not been taught to look forward to an annual election for leader, nor solicited by rival candidates or their friends, 'for their votes and influence,' they are generally satisfied with and edified by those whom they have chosen.

Upon the whole, we feel humbly thankful to God, for having been saved from the sore evil of an annual election for class leaders. And the Christian community have common cause of rejoicing with us, that those little associations of Christians, denominated class meetings, distributed over our country, diffusing the benefits of Christian love and religious fellowship in their several neighbourhoods, have not been converted into so many arenas of electioneering conflict and strife,—biting and devouring one another, and bringing reproach, not only upon themselves, but upon the common cause of Christianity.

The leading objection which, from the beginning, has been urged against the innovations proposed in our ecclesiastical polity, is, that the changes, if made, would destroy our itinerant system, and eventually produce in its stead a congregational system, or some other plan of government recognising a settled pastoral ministry. It is true that the advocates of these innovations professed no intention to destroy our itinerant plan; on the contrary they would have persuaded us that they were its best friends; though it was easily foreseen that the principles upon which they acted, would as inevitably produce such a result, as if it were intended. The development of their scheme in its practical details, has now demonstrated this to the satisfaction of every friend of Methodism, who is not weak enough to be misled by mere names.

The constitution and form of government adopted by the Convention, while it *proposes* an itinerant plan of operation, makes the itinerancy a subordinate appendage to the great system. It requires, indeed, of the itinerant ministers, all the sacrifices and privations to which our plan subjects them,—a submission to the appointments which are assigned them, whatever sacrifices of personal or domestic comforts such submission may involve; while those who make these appointments, are elected by laymen and local preachers, over whom the appointing power can exercise no authority whatever. These are terms upon which no man ought to consent to be an itinerant preacher, and if any do so, they will soon tire of the service in which they have engaged. Our travelling preachers submit to the appointment of the bishops, who may send them to labour in any part of the United States or territories. They do this because they believe the great plan of missionary operation in which they are engaged, cannot be carried on without lodging somewhere the absolute power of distributing the labourers. They have, therefore, committed this power to those who, having participated and continuing to participate with them in their labours and privations, have entitled themselves to their confidence; and who, partaking of the common suffering, and devoted to the common cause, have no local interests to subserve, and no private ends to gratify; and moreover are prepared to sympathize with them in their sufferings, not only with a parental solicitude, but from an experimental acquaintance with their privations and sacrifices, and are ultimately amenable for the due discharge of their office, to the body of those over whom they exercise the appointing power. But under the new system, the local preachers and laity, who make up a very large majority of the annual conferences, are to make the preachers' appointments, either in the collective body, or in such other way as they may direct; and in whatever way this may be done, the travelling preachers, constituting a feeble minority in the conference, can make no resistance to the absolute domination of the laity and local preachers.

If the above allegations against the new system be just, we think

it will be admitted by the most skeptical, that no permanent and efficient itinerancy CAN be established upon the principles of government adopted by the Convention ; and that they are just, a very cursory review will be sufficient to show.

By the sixth article, it is provided that all the ordained ministers, travelling and local, shall have a seat in the annual conferences, and that there shall be a lay delegation equal to the whole number of ministers in said conferences ;—and it is subsequently provided that these conferences shall provide the mode of stationing the travelling preachers, who shall be bound to submit to such appointment ; and that the president elected by the conference, shall have the absolute disposal of these travelling preachers, during the year for which he is elected. It will be seen that in the constitution of these conferences the travelling ministers will bear a very insignificant part. They will probably be outnumbered as ten to one by the local preachers, without taking the laymen into the account, who make up one half of the conference. The appointing power, with all its absolute prerogatives, may therefore be lodged exclusively in the hands of local preachers or laymen, over whom this power cannot be exercised in any way whatever.—The travelling preachers are expected to yield implicit submission to those whose authority they have not conferred, and cannot limit or restrain ; and those, too, who do not participate in their privations and sufferings, and who cannot therefore be supposed either justly to appreciate their amount, or properly to sympathize with those who endure them. Add to all this, that each annual conference has the power to make rules and regulations for its own government, and for the government of the circuits and stations within its bounds, limited only by the constitution ; and it will be seen that the travelling preachers are to submit, even after their appointments, to such regulations as may be imposed upon them by the laity and local preachers, who constitute the great body of the annual conferences ; and in short will be reduced to the simple condition of domestic missionaries,—doing whatever duty their task masters may assign them, and that too without any stipulated compensation.

We know that a late commentator has alleged that the travelling preachers and the laity, constituting a majority in the annual conferences, will at all times be able to ‘keep the local preachers in order.’ But it must not be forgotten that the local preachers will be more likely to possess undue influence with the laity than the itinerant preachers. They will come up together to the conference ; will be identified in the local interests of their stations or circuits ; will be often found allied by marriage or consanguinity, and always by vicinity of residence and habitual intercourse. The local preachers being speakers by profession, the lay delegates will mostly be dependent upon them for the necessary representation of the particular circumstances and wants of their constituents, and

will, from all these circumstances, acquire an influence over the lay delegates which cannot be obtained by the small proportion of travelling preachers who will be found in the conference. It will even be in the power of the local preachers to exert much influence in the election of the lay delegates ; because from their ministerial services, they will be extensively known among the membership, and cannot fail to give a powerful support to those candidates whom they may favor with their recommendation. It may be alleged further, in support of the presumption that the local preachers will acquire an undue preponderance in the new system,—that the history of all churches who have adopted a confederated form of government, and have admitted a lay delegation into the councils of the church, shows that the laymen are very remiss in their attention to their delegated duties ; and even in the late Convention the local preachers constituted a majority of the assembly. Whatever therefore may be the privileges of the laity, the ministry will eventually have the business of legislation pretty much to themselves ; and of these, the local preachers in the new church will constitute an overwhelming majority, and thereby secure in fact all the power to themselves.

Thus the tendency of the system we are reviewing is inevitably to congregationalism and a local ministry. The privations are all on the part of the travelling preachers, while the advantages are all in favor of the local preachers ; and as if the result was foreseen and provided for, each society or church is by the third article of the constitution, separately and distinctly, vested with the right of property in the houses they may build for the purposes of public worship, or for parsonages, or which may be built for them by the contributions of their brethren. Whenever, therefore, they may prefer a local to a travelling minister, they may settle one, and refuse the use of the pulpit to the minister sent to them by the conference, as well as all contribution for his support. The travelling preacher may spend his strength and his health in preaching the gospel, and in raising societies and churches, but his local brethren will enter into his labours, and reap all the temporal benefits of his ministry.

The right which the Methodist Episcopal Church secures to her travelling preachers, of occupying the pulpits in the several churches which belong to the stations or circuits where they may be appointed to labour, is all that is secured to them, as regards the church property ; and this privilege has been loudly complained of, and represented by our adversaries as vesting an absolute right of property in the bishops ; because they have the right, ‘not of taking the houses from the people, but of taking the preachers from the houses.’ Absurd as this allegation is, it is rendered still more obviously so by the fact, that, although the bishop may *change* the preacher, yet he must fill the appointments if there be labourers enough at his disposal ;—and he is moreover amenable for his con-

duct to those who appoint him, and over whom he exercises his authority. The Methodist houses of worship are considered as the common property of the Methodists, both preachers and people. They are often, with this view, erected chiefly by the contributions of those who have no personal occasion for their use. The necessity for the erection of a house of worship in any place being ascertained, all we require is, that it shall contribute, when erected, its quota of facility to the common missionary purpose for which we are associated; and that it be so settled as not to be under any circumstances diverted from the use for which it was erected.

It is well that this article has made known the localizing system of our reformers. Who will contribute to the erection of a house of worship, which is destined to follow the vicissitudes of religious opinion which may take place in any separate and isolated society? Under the operation of this rule, should the societies vested with a right in these houses, renounce the doctrines of Christianity, and become Unitarians, or followers of Mr. Owen, the houses would nevertheless continue their property, and might be converted to any use which suited their purposes.

It may however be asked, whether the General Conference of the Associated Methodist churches, may not so alter the present constitution as to make it more favorable to an itinerant system. To this we answer, that the complexion of the General Conference is still more adverse to the interests of the travelling preachers than the annual conferences. In the latter, the itinerant ministry are at least sure of being present; but from the General Conference they may be excluded altogether. The representatives are to be chosen by the annual conferences, in which, as we have shown, the travelling ministry will constitute a very small minority; and there is nothing in the constitution which requires that any portion of them shall be chosen as representatives to the General Conference. The supreme council of the Church may therefore be composed of local preachers and laymen exclusively, notwithstanding that if an efficient itinerancy be intended, the measures which will be the subjects of deliberation in that body must chiefly relate to the great missionary operations of the Church, and consequently to the duties and labours of the travelling preachers. If any will be itinerant preachers on such terms as these, they are welcome to the crown of martyrdom they covet,—we shall not envy them the glory of suffering in such a cause. Indeed the absurdity of the conventional articles is so apparent, upon the supposition that they were really designed to provide for an efficient itinerant system, that we cannot admit the supposition at all. Yet the itinerancy having always been a popular part of Methodism, avowedly to abandon it would have frustrated all the plans of leading separatists. They could have procured no followers among the membership, had they proposed at once a congregational government and a settled ministry. When this comes to pass, and come it necessarily must, it

will be represented perhaps as the result of uncontrollable necessity. And as in the case of their predecessors in the New-York Convention, and in about the same length of time, the 'Associated Methodists' will have about as many regular itinerant ministers as the memorable 'Methodist Society' have.

We are aware that at first there may be preachers who will enter the list of itinerancy, calculating on their own personal popularity for the influence they hope to exercise in the Church and its councils. They well know that some degree of firmness and stability must be acquired by the Church authorities, before they can venture to control their choice of circuits or stations. The very paucity of their numbers will, in the onset, occasion them to be courted, and flattered, and followed, by those whose party spirit must be gratified by producing, through the agency of travelling preachers, contention, strife, and division, in our Church. When the strife is over, and they cease to occasion separations,—when a division of the spoil is to be made, and the preponderance of local influence begins to be felt, they can locate also, and thus have at least an equal chance in the scramble for churches and congregations which will inevitably occur.

It will not surprise us if misrepresented by our adversaries; but let us not be misunderstood by our brethren of other denominations. We entertain no hostility to congregational church government, nor to any other system of ecclesiastical polity, which provides for and supports a settled ministry for those who choose it. We readily acknowledge the right of every Christian Church to judge for themselves as to the way in which they can best provide for their own spiritual welfare, and greatly rejoice in the good which has been done, and is still doing, under the various forms of government and different plans of operation which have been instituted. Perhaps the great Head of the Church has permitted us thus to differ in things indifferent, for the purpose of multiplying effort, and varying the means of spreading the gospel; and we would not complain of the evident tendency of the system which has been adopted by the separatists from our Church, towards Congregationalism, if they did not urge upon us the adoption of their schemes, and bitterly revile us because we tenaciously adhere to the institutions under which we have long prospered, and which have enabled us to be extensively useful, in the common effort to diffuse the blessings of Christianity throughout the world. We have, as a people, endeavoured to follow the leadings of Providence, from the beginning, and we cannot change our present plan of operation, until it shall please God to point out to us some other plan by which we can do more good. Meantime, the circumstances of our origin, and our whole history, clearly point to an itinerant system of ministration as our particular calling. This appears to be the portion of labour which has been assigned by the Lord of the vineyard to us as a people. We do not deem ourselves called to supplant or render

unnecessary the labours of others, or the efforts of other churches, but to render our share of service, and to carry or send the gospel to those who could not be reached in the ordinary methods to which a settled ministry are necessarily limited. Our whole system is essentially a missionary one, proposing to furnish an evangelical ministry,—not only to those who desire it, but to those who are too ignorant to know the value of the privilege, and therefore cannot be expected to ask for such services. Other churches may furnish ministers to those who call them,—and we are happy that those who ask can have ; but to call and settle a minister, implies that those who do so, have already been brought to understand and experience the benefits of the gospel ; and moreover that they have the means, and are willing to provide for the support of a minister. But when all who are able and willing to call and settle ministers are supplied, many precious souls will be destitute of the word of life, who are nevertheless included in the commission given by our Lord to his disciples, ‘Go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.’ To supply these, however, requires a system of missionary operation, in which the personal comforts and conveniences of the missionaries can scarcely be consulted at all ; and such is our itinerant system. As pioneers of the gospel, the labours of our ministers are as necessary to other churches as to our own ; and ministers of other denominations often find settlements, in consequence of the religious interest which has been waked up in a neighbourhood by a Methodist itinerant, who, labouring in his vocation as a missionary, had visited it, and carried to the very doors of the people the blessings of the gospel. It is true that such a system requires sacrifices of the membership, as well as of the ministry. When the minister cannot be allowed to choose his place of labour, the membership must relinquish their right of choosing the minister who may be most acceptable to them, and those who are able must feel the religious obligation of supporting a ministry who are perhaps labouring among a people whom they have never seen. These are thought by some to be great sacrifices, but generally speaking, we have not found them so ; on the contrary, we believe we have been greatly benefited by the arrangement, even in our best established societies ; and that the itinerant system has greatly tended, not only to the spread of the gospel, but to preserve in the Church a zealous, laborious, and self denying ministry.

The tenacity with which the Methodists adhere to their itinerancy, and the firmness with which they resist all innovations upon the system by which it has heretofore been perpetuated, will not be surprising to our brethren of other denominations, when they reflect how much it has been blessed to us, and that we have been led to consider this feature of our economy, not only as a distinguishing feature of Methodism, but as the part of our plan which has been most efficient in that vast field of missionary labour which we have so long occupied ; and by which we are encouraged to hope for

still more extensive usefulness in the world. We ask nothing of our adversaries but that they will let us alone. The world is before them, and there is ample room for their utmost exertions to reclaim sinners, and organize them into churches. We shall throw no impediments in their way, if they design to pursue this good work; but it cannot be their calling to sow dissension and strife among brethren. If they prefer their local system, let them enjoy it. Following the best light we have, we shall adhere to the institutions of our fathers, until some opening of Providence shall unequivocally direct us to a better course.

Nothing in the new system of government adopted by the late Convention, has so much disappointed the public expectation as the total abandonment of those republican principles, which had been their constant theme during the seven years war which they had waged against the Methodist Episcopal Church. We had been led to suppose that nothing would satisfy these 'freeborn sons of America,' as they fondly styled themselves, but a church government founded upon the principles and copying the institutions of the civil government of our country. It was the want of this conformity between the polity of our Church and the constitution of the United States, that was made the ground of incessant reproach and declamation against us, by those who insisted upon a total change in our ecclesiastical economy. In vain did we allege the necessary and essential difference between church and state governments. In vain did we show that they were totally dissimilar in their origin, in the authority with which they were intrusted, and in the design of their institution; and that it could not therefore be expected or desired, that institutions so entirely different in their nature should be alike in their organization. In answer to all this, though it was impossible to reason, it was nevertheless found very practicable to declaim; and the changes were incessantly rung upon the popular topics of liberty and equality, and the civil rights acknowledged by the constitution of our country to reside in the people. We were thus authorized to suppose that the new constitution and form of government would be based upon the principle that all power resides in the people, and that the exercise of this power in enacting and executing the laws, would be committed only to their representatives. It could not fail therefore to surprise those who had given credit to the loud and long professions of republicanism, which had been made by the leaders of this wonderful reformation, that they commenced their career in constitution making, by a direct acknowledgment of the rights of privileged orders in their government; orders too, not only distinguished by ministerial privileges, but to whom were allowed superior advantages and authority in legislation. It was not indeed expected that the new system would recognise in the people, that is in the membership, a common right to preach the gospel, because the framers of it had all along admitted that this right could only be conferred by divine authority.

But they had strenuously insisted at the same time, that the ministry had no superior claims in the government of the church, and in this respect could only participate in the common privilege of legislating in person or by their representatives. If so, why did the Convention admit the whole body of the ministry into the annual conferences, and a representation from them in the General Conference equal in number to that from the membership? Nothing can be more essential to the existence of a republican government, than representation apportioned according to numbers; yet if the proportion between the membership and the ministry in the new Church, shall be any thing like that which exists in the Church from which they have seceded, the ministry will be to the membership as little more than about one to one hundred; and of course this promised paragon of excellence in church government,—this liberty and equality system, turns out to be one in which *one* local preacher embodies in his own puissant little self as much legislative and executive authority as *one hundred* of the common people!!

It will avail nothing to urge in justification of this aristocratic feature in the new constitution, that in the Methodist Episcopal Church the government is intrusted to the travelling preachers; because we have never pretended to be influenced in our ecclesiastical economy by the abstract principles which have been so strenuously contended for by our opponents. We admit that our church government is based upon the broad principle of utility. Our itinerant ministry having a common interest with the membership, and being enabled by their occupation to acquire a more perfect and comprehensive understanding of the general interests and wants of our community, we have been willing to leave with them the adoption of such prudential regulations as may be necessary to carry into effect the common purpose of our association, namely, 'to spread scriptural holiness over the earth;' and we do this with perfect safety while we have confidence in the piety and intelligence of our ministry, while, from their itinerant life, they are prevented from forming those isolated associations which would tend to localize their interests, or circumscribe their views, and while they continue so entirely dependent upon the voluntary contributions of the membership for their maintenance. In short, on the ground of expediency which we assume as the foundation of our polity, we have many reasons to urge in favor of the existing regulations of our Church, and it will afford us the same justification when circumstances shall induce us to change them. But our reformers have never assailed the *utility* of our institutions, nor proposed to change them on the plea of expediency. They were deterred from this course by the amount and stubbornness of the facts that stood in their way. The utility of our institutions is attested by their success: a success without parallel in the modern history of the Christian Church. They could only be assailed by abstract disquisitions, and by contrasting them with popular political princi-

ples with which in their nature and application they had nothing to do.

We were therefore held up to the community as enemies to the government of our country, because we did not conform our economy to the representative system, so happily adopted as the basis of our civil institutions. Our opponents had therefore pledged themselves that when they set up for themselves, they would conform their church polity to the principles of the civil constitution of our country. Instead of this, however, they have instituted an ARISTOCRATICAL government, giving it just enough of democratical appearances to allure the membership to accept it; while, in fact, the local-preacher aristocracy was provided with such powers and privileges, as would enable it to engross all the authority, both legislative and executive, in the Church. This is the more unaccountable, because there was neither necessity, utility, nor safety, in making this sacrifice of the principles for which the reformers had so zealously contended. That there was no necessity for it, they have themselves acknowledged; for in their petition to the last General Conference, the former Convention had expressly prayed, that the local preachers might be identified with the laity, in the representation which they desired to have in that body. The local preachers abandoned all claim to a distinct and separate delegation from their own body, and even to the privilege of being united with the delegation from the itinerant ministry. Such privileges could not therefore be deemed necessary to the good of the Church, or they would have been prayed for, or, at least, the claim to them would not have been renounced. The utility or even safety of the membership thus succumbing to local-preacher domination, we hope we have already clearly disproved. If any thing more was wanting we might add, that many of the circumstances which make it safe in the Methodist Episcopal Church to commit authority to the itinerant preachers, are wanting in the body to which the new Church has given it. The permanent residence of the local preachers within circumscribed districts of country, not only precludes them from acquiring that knowledge of the general state of the Church, essential to the adaptation of general provisions for her welfare, but also tends to localize their interests and feelings. 'Local men have local views.' Moreover, they are exempted from that wholesome dependence upon the laity for the temporal support both of themselves and of their families, which with us infallibly preserves the balance of power. Nor is there in the new Church any substitute for this wholesome check upon the authority of their local preacher legislators. They are no way amenable to the membership for their acts or doings. They are not the representatives of the people. The people are not their constituents, and therefore cannot, as is necessary in all representative governments, express by their votes their opinions in regard to their legislators, or the laws they have enacted. If, as we are told by a late essayist in the *Mutual Rights*, 'money

is power,' it will be obvious that it is unsafe to commit legislative authority to those over whose money matters the community exercises no control, and whose claim to the right of legislation is at the same time beyond the reach of those for whom they legislate.—Hence it was unwise, as well as anti-republican, in the laity of the new Church, to give such an overwhelming influence to their local preachers, who were in no way dependent upon them, when they had felt such fearful apprehensions from the power of itinerant preachers, whose whole authority the membership could annihilate by simply tying their purse strings.

Upon the whole, it is obvious that even in reference to the balance of power between the ministry and membership, the laity of the new Church have changed their situation for the worse; and this was the only change they ever hoped to make for the better. They always admitted that in the Methodist Episcopal Church the gospel was faithfully and effectually preached,—the ordinances duly administered,—the moral discipline unexceptionable, and the membership generally pious; but then the government was not sufficiently republican,—the preachers were not sufficiently responsible. The preachers, however, subsisted by their bounty, and therefore could do nothing to the prejudice of the membership, without at the same time jeopardizing their own interests. Nevertheless, to avoid this imaginary Scylla, they have run into a real Charybdis; for they have in effect given up the reins of government to local preachers over whom they have no such salutary check or control; and instead of a republican government, have established one, the distinguishing feature of which is, *ARISTOCRATIC*, and the predominating principle of which is, its irresponsibility to the people.

The mention of money matters brings to our recollection a radical defect, which we noticed in looking over the articles of association. There is no provision for paying the expenses of the delegates, either lay, local, or itinerant, to and from the General Conferences. The local and itinerant delegates may preach and work their passage perhaps without such a provision. But what are the lay delegates to do? If no provision is made by the circuits and stations in which they reside, nor by the General Conference, one of two things must take place: either the lay delegates will not generally attend when the Conference is at a great distance from their residences, or the delegation must be selected from the rich members who can individually bear the expense, to the utter exclusion of those whose circumstances in life will not justify the expense. Even of the richer part of the membership, few will be found so situated as to be able to leave their families perhaps for months, without great inconvenience; so that the selection must be confined chiefly to those who are rich, who have no families, and no business,—and these will be hopeful legislators for a Church! If the delegates from a distance do not generally attend, the business must be done by those living in the vicinity of the Conference,

and the wants and wishes of the remote districts cannot be attended to; the inevitable consequence of which will be a dissolution of the confederacy; and when this takes place, into how many fragments the associated churches will be broken it is impossible to imagine.

If the circuits and stations are expected each to provide for the expenses of their own delegates, the result will be the same.—Some will be found too poor to avail themselves of their privileges, and in all the remoter circuits and stations, the inequality of the burden will be a just subject of complaint, which, if not removed, must dissolve the association. The expenses of a delegate from some places must exceed that of others a hundred fold. It will therefore be contended, and justly too, that expenses incurred for the common benefit, should be equally borne by all. The fund out of which the delegates are to be reimbursed must of course be a common one, and its supply must not be left to the uncertain result of voluntary contribution, but must be collected by the equal apportionment of a general taxation.

We shall probably be told, that the late Convention afforded an instance of the willingness of the delegates elected by the membership to attend to their duties without compensation. We are not sure, however, that the expenses of many were not borne by those who sent them; and the record of the absentees, even under the circumstances of the extraordinary excitement in which the Convention was got up, gives fearful presage of what will happen when party spirit has subsided. The delegation was also confined, for the most part, to those whose places of residence were either in the vicinity of Baltimore, or to such as were engaged in commercial pursuits, and who had other business in that city. Extraordinary efforts were likewise made for the occasion; some idea of which may be formed from the fact, that, in a neighbouring circuit, after advertising for a month in the newspapers that a meeting of reformers would take place on a certain day at the county town, to elect delegates to the Convention, *nine* persons met and elected *six* representatives! The partial representation which was obtained in the last Convention is therefore of itself sufficient to show, that something more must be done to insure a general attendance of delegates from all parts of the Union in the supreme council of the Church. In short, when men undertake to do business in which others have an equal concern, they entertain the reasonable expectation that the expenses attending the transaction will be borne equally by all parties; and the most that could be expected of the delegates is, that they will serve without any compensation for their loss of time, and this is more than many can afford to do. The result of the whole is, that the means of paying the expenses of the delegates must be certainly provided for by the Church. The only adequate and certain means that can be devised is taxation, and hence the new association have only the choice between taxation or dissolution.

When this necessity of resorting to taxation in a Church government constituted according to the notions of our reformers, was suggested some time ago in the 'Appeal to the Methodists,' the objection was simply met by the question, 'Could not the delegates be instructed by their constituents not to tax them?' To which it was only necessary to reply, that they certainly might; but this would not remove the difficulty, inasmuch as it would still remain necessary to meet by some other means the expenses of the delegates to the General Conference.

We are told, however, that if the articles of association are faulty, they can be mended; and, indeed, they remind us of what the facetious Butler says of some religious creeds, which

— 'Were intended
For nothing else, but to be mended.'

The idea of mending such a disjointed, incongruous system, as the one we have been reviewing, is in the last degree absurd. It reminds us of the reply of Pope's postilion to his master's frequent ejaculation of; 'Lord mend me.' 'Mend you!' said the postilion, looking at his crooked back and general deformity, 'it would not be half as much trouble to make a new one.' There are in the system as many defects at least as there are articles, any one of which would be fatal to the success of the whole scheme. In fact, the principles upon which it is based, are not only wrong, but absurd; and therefore the superstructure can neither be repaired nor remodelled to any useful purpose. The builders must lay a different and more solid foundation, before they can erect an edifice of such magnitude and utility as they propose.

Those who speak confidently of mending the present constitution of the new Church at the next Convention, have taken a very superficial view of the articles of association. Some alterations of minor importance may be made, because it may not be the interest of the local preachers to oppose them; but none will or can be effected that will go to lessen the ministerial preponderance in the government of the Church; because the ministry will possess a representation in the Convention equal to that of the laity, and can thereby prevent any changes which may be prejudicial to their interest. It is in vain, then, that the constitution provides, *in theory*, for its own amendment. Any effort to curtail the powers or privileges of the local preachers, may be defeated by their own delegation, and the influence they cannot fail to have over their personal friends among the lay representatives. It will not, therefore, be in the power of the next Convention to lessen the relative proportion of ministerial delegates in that body, unless the preachers themselves desire it; and this we think is not a probable contingency. Alterations allowed by the constitution, may be as impracticable as if they were forbidden. The constitution of the state of Maryland, according to its provisions, may be so altered by the people as to restrict the

right of suffrage to freeholders only ; but it is obviously as much impossible to effect such an alteration, as if it were prohibited entirely ; because a large majority of the voters are interested in preventing it. On the same principle the local-preacher aristocracy will continue to possess a paramount authority in the church government they have already formed, in spite of the enticing song about liberty and equality with which they have been, for the last seven years, amusing their enchanted hearers.

We proceed to notice some other provisions in the new constitution, which are worthy of attention. It will be recollected that among the regulations of our Church, none were so much complained of by our reformers, as the rule respecting such as should be convicted of endeavouring to sow dissensions in the Church, by inveighing against our doctrines and discipline ; and also the rule providing the method to be pursued in the trial of members. It must therefore surprise our readers to learn, that they have adopted the first, without any alteration whatever, into their new code ; and the other they have also admitted with this additional provision, 'that nothing therein contained shall be so construed as to deprive an accused member of the right to challenge ;'—a provision which cannot be practically admitted without rendering the expulsion of a member impossible, if he desires to retain his membership. It will be perceived that the right to challenge, is not restricted in any way whatever. It is not limited to a right to *challenge for cause*. It is a right to challenge, *peremptorily*, any person, and any number of persons, that may be appointed on the committee, without assigning any reason for it whatever,—so that if the accused will only persevere in challenging, he may not only escape conviction, however guilty, but elude all the efforts of the Church to bring him to trial. How truly has it been said, that '*to innovate is not to reform.*' The right to object against any person who may be summoned to try a case involving the character or interests of one against whom he had shown himself prejudiced, requires no ecclesiastical statute, without supposing great depravity in the administrators of discipline ; and should such depravity exist, its effects would be corrected by the superior judicatory, having appellate jurisdiction in the case : but to give a right to challenge peremptorily, and that without limitation, is to defeat the ends of justice altogether, and to expose the communion of the Church to open profanation. Our reformers must try their hands upon this article again, whatever they may do with the rest. In its present shape it will never do. It is of itself sufficient to destroy all the ends of Christian discipline, and a few more abortive efforts to improve upon our discipline, will at least have one good effect,—it will teach innovators that though no human system of government can be absolutely perfect, yet it is often much easier to point out defects than to mend them.

We know that the General Conference have anxiously desired to improve that part of our discipline which relates to the trial of

offending members, and have had under their consideration at different times a variety of propositions to this effect ; but hitherto none have been proposed which were not more defective than that which they proposed to amend. We venture to promise on the part of the General Conference, that they will readily make any proper change in this matter, which may be suggested to them by either friend or foe. It is alike their interest and their duty to do so. But let him that advises an alteration be sure that he understands the matter,—that his situation commands a view of the whole ground. Let him not form his opinion upon views which he may have taken of city stations or circuits, where the societies are large, but adapt his plan to all the great variety of circumstances in which our membership are found in our widely extended connexion. Many a plausible scheme, when viewed in the abstract, will be found to be utterly inapplicable to the circumstances of the people for whose benefit it is designed. The celebrated John Locke, author of the well known work on the human mind, prepared, at the request of the proprietors of North Carolina, a constitution and form of government for the people of that colony, which was found upon experiment so utterly inapplicable to the state of the population, that it was, after some feeble attempts to establish it, totally laid aside ; and the woodsmen met together, and adopted a few simple regulations, much more suitable to their circumstances than the recondite production of that distinguished metaphysician. It should also be remembered by all constitution manufacturers, that it is not only by the want of laws that a society, whether civil or ecclesiastical, may be placed in difficulties,—they may be equally embarrassed by too much regulation. And in the instance to which we have alluded above, the members of the new association may find it as inconvenient, and as dangerous to their peace and prosperity, to have introduced a rule into their discipline by which the most unworthy members may hold their membership, in defiance of all the constituted authorities of the Church, as to have risked the improbable contingency of an accused member being refused the privilege of objecting to a hostile committee ;—especially as such maleadministration would always find an effectual corrective in the Quarterly Meeting Conference, unless a universal corruption had pervaded the Church ; and in that case, a good man would not be very anxious to retain his membership.

But there is one effort at emendation which seems to give the separatists great satisfaction, and it would seem hard to deprive them of at least one subject of gratulation, to console them for the manifest and total failure in the other parts of their code. The effort too, comes to us with such an air of piety, that we would incline to commend it, if it were only for the habiliments in which it is dressed ; for pious endeavours are always entitled to respect, though the opinions by which they are directed be ever so erroneous. But with all our disposition to forbearance, we cannot

spare our reformers this one matter of rejoicing. It is, notwithstanding its imposing appearance, an error, and it is our duty to expose it; that when, at their next Convention, they commence reforming their recently reformed code, they may correct this among other defects. We allude to the provision in the fifth article, which enacts, that 'the first business of the Quarterly Conference shall be, to inquire into the official and religious characters of all its members.'

Dr. Jennings, in his remarks on the conventional articles lately published, chuckles over this provision, as a matter of great triumph over the old side brethren. This rule may be practised, he says, in some Quarterly Meeting Conferences of our Church; but for such practice there is no rule of discipline. Now we confess we did not know that such a practice ever did obtain among us any where; and we are very sure it ought not to be introduced either as custom or discipline; for this obvious reason, that it would preclude all the lay members of the conference from the benefit of an appeal, if they thought themselves aggrieved by the decision of the conference, in reference to any matter which might be alleged against their religious characters. If upon such inquiry any allegations should be made against a layman, the conference must do one of two things;—either appoint a committee to investigate the charges, or bring the member to trial before their own body. In the latter case, there would be no superior judicatory to whom an appeal would lie; and in the former, the accused must appeal from the decision of the committee to the Quarterly Meeting Conference who appointed it, and before whom the charges were made,—that is, the member must appeal to the grand jury who originated the indictment. In our Annual Conferences and District Conferences, this practice obtains; but the members of these conferences have an appeal to higher church judicatories. But to subject class leaders and stewards, who are mostly laymen, to the same regulation, would be cruel and unjust, because it would deprive them of a privilege common to all the rest of their brethren. It is common among us for the Quarterly Meeting Conference to inquire into the *official* conduct, gifts, and qualifications of the members; but not into their moral or religious characters. They are to be dealt with as other members of the Church are, for any irreligious or immoral conduct, and have the same right of appeal. Upon a review of the matter, we think that Dr. Jennings will himself perceive, that the Methodist Episcopal Church had very good reasons for not requiring the Quarterly Meeting Conferences to pass upon the religious characters of their lay members, except upon appeals from the decisions of inferior tribunals.

But it would be endless to point out all the defects in the conventional articles of the new association. We have already exhibited the fundamental errors in this new scheme to which reformers had looked with so much confidence, as promising to show a pattern

of excellence to all Christian denominations. But we must be permitted to trespass a little longer upon the patience of our readers, in order to show, that the system, in fact, could not be carried into effect, for the want of essential provisions which have been entirely overlooked by the Convention.

For instance, it is provided that the Annual Conferences shall be composed of 'all the ordained ministers, and an equal number of lay delegates.' But the constitution does not provide for the apportionment of the lay delegates, among the several churches, circuits, or stations. It will be easy to ascertain how many ordained ministers there are within the bounds of the Conference, and consequently the aggregate amount of lay delegates who will be entitled to sit in that body; but the ratio of representation is nowhere settled by the constitution. Hence, it will be impossible for any church, circuit, or station, to ascertain how many delegates they are to elect. Some may send too many, and others too few. The church in Baltimore, for instance, may send so many as to give them undue weight in the Conference; and other churches may supply so few, that the lay delegates will not, upon the whole, constitute a legal proportion of the Conference;—and hence the acts of the body will be illegal, the membership not being adequately represented. If it be said that the Annual Conferences can remedy this defect, and apportion the delegation among the churches according to numbers or otherwise, we answer, that there must first be an Annual Conference before this arrangement can be made; and yet the arrangement must be made, *before* the first Conference can be legally constituted! A strange dilemma this to be placed in, and that, too, by men who thought themselves competent to reform all our well-tested regulations. Again, suppose the apportionment of the delegates to be somehow or other settled six months before the election, yet the relative proportion between the ordained ministers and the lay delegates may be changed, either before or at the Conference. The candidates for orders, who may obtain the necessary recommendations in the interval, will be ordained *by the president,* and two or more elected* according to the constitution, either before or at the meeting of the Conference, and will then be entitled *ex-officio* to a seat in that assembly,—thus rendering all its acts invalid, by increasing the list of ministerial members beyond the constitutional proportion. These difficulties are absolutely insurmountable; no human ingenuity can either elude or remedy them. The provisions of the constitution *cannot* be carried into effect; and therefore the associated churches must either agree to disregard them, and act without

* Was it an oversight, or was it by design, that the Convention did not require the president to be taken from the body of ministers, although he is, during his continuance in office, invested with episcopal powers; having a right to ordain ministers, and to make all necessary changes in the appointments of the travelling preachers? For any thing to the contrary in the constitution, these presidents, or bishops, may be laymen!!

a constitution, or call another General Convention forthwith. Even the General Convention, which according to article 16, is to meet in November, 1830, will not be able, according to the present organization, to remedy the evil; because there is the same want of any provision ascertaining the ratio of representation from the several Annual Conferences to the Convention. It is nowhere said that the Annual Conferences shall be represented according to their numbers; and hence each conference is at liberty to send as many delegates as it pleases. The consequence may be, that any one or more of these conferences, desirous to introduce particular provisions into the constitution, may insure success by a numerous and disproportionate delegation. One thing at least seems however to be carefully provided for in the Conventional articles, namely, that there should be a *quantum sufficit* [an ample supply] of local-preacher influence in all the departments of the new government; and so it will inevitably remain, whatever alterations may be made hereafter in other respects.

Upon the whole, we confess, we did wait with some degree of anxiety, during the 'ten days' agony' of the Convention, for the result of their deliberations. We did anticipate a system somewhat more plausible and imposing, than the articles we have been reviewing; and, consequently, that many would be led astray by its speciousness, and by an appeal to the political sentiments common to Methodists with all the rest of our countrymen. Our fears were instantly dissipated, however, when we saw the new constitution, as anti-republican in its principles, as it is impracticable and absurd in its provisions. And now that the result is known, and our Church has escaped from the storm of passion and party spirit which had threatened to shake it from its foundation, and overwhelm it in irretrievable ruin, we feel like a mariner who, having endured a night of tempest, when no human skill or power could guide him in safety, looks back in the morning, after the winds have been hushed and the clouds have dispersed, and sees on either hand the rocks amidst which an unseen hand had guided him in safety. While he cannot but shudder at the recollection of the dangers to which he had been exposed, the full tide of gratitude rushes upon his heart, and fills his soul with the delicious, absorbing sensation of thankfulness,—thankfulness to Him who is the only sure and certain refuge in the time of trouble. Here then we raise our Ebenezer;—for hitherto the Lord hath helped us. Our enemies 'have imagined a vain thing.' They set themselves to subvert a system which the Lord had owned and blessed, and made tributary to the salvation of thousands. Their efforts have failed; and instead of being able to move us, they have, on the contrary, compelled us to 'remember all the way in which the Lord our God hath led us,'—to go back to first principles,—to reäsure ourselves of their correctness, and, having done so, we resolve to cleave with full purpose of heart to the Lord, and to abide in the institutions of 'our Fathers.'

A REPLY TO MR. ALEXANDER M'CAINE.

Continued from page 97.

OUR readers in general, we doubt not, are already well satisfied on the main points in this controversy; and we shall therefore endeavour to despatch the residue of it with all convenient brevity.

The next head in order, to be reviewed, is,

SECTION VI.—*Dr. Coke's Letter to Bishop White.*

In the 'Defence of our Fathers' (p. 30-32,) I undertook to show that Bishop White's Letter of July 1804, contains evidence that the Bishop 'mistook the import of Dr. Coke's letter;' and added, that it was 'possible' that he might equally have 'misapprehended a hint in conversation.' In reference to these passages, which Mr. M'Caine seems anxious to torture into accusations of falsehood against Bishop White, he exclaims,—'Mr. Emory ought to be ashamed of such insinuations against such a man as Bishop White.'—What insinuations?—Is it a shame to believe that Bishop White 'mistook' the import of a letter? Have not the greatest and best men mistaken the import both of written and printed documents, and of such as have been open to inspection for ages? If this be not so, then contradictions must be true, for different men,—though great and good,—have entertained contradictory opinions of the same documents. This is true not only with regard to human documents, such as laws, treaties, deeds, wills, &c,—but it is equally true with regard to the inspired oracles, which were designed to be a light to our feet, and a lamp to our path. Or does the shame consist in saying that it was 'possible' that Bishop White might 'misapprehend a hint in conversation?' Ought not Mr. M'Caine to be 'ashamed' of such gross adulation of any human being? And is it not remarkable that he should resort to it, in reference to Bishop White, just at this juncture? 'But this [he says] is not the first time Bishop White has received rude treatment from this pragmatistical writer.'—This is a most unfortunate allusion for Mr. M'Caine;—equally so as his attack on Dr. Bangs's work on Episcopacy, although he himself was one of the committee by whom its publication was recommended. As there has been no controversy between Bishop White and myself, except in relation to an essay published by that gentleman, some years since, against the doctrine of the Methodists in regard to the 'witness of the Spirit,' I presume this of course to be the occasion to which Mr. M'Caine alludes. And I say the allusion is a most unfortunate one for him, because it was *at his house*, while we were 'colleagues in Philadelphia,' that a meeting was held for reading my principal manuscript in that controversy; and he was one of a few *friends* to whom it was then and there submitted, previously to its publication. If he *then* thought that Bishop White was right, and I wrong,—or that my 'treatment' of the Bishop was 'rude,' I should think that a man of 'honest bluntness,'

when thus consulted as a friend, would have told me so. If he did do this, it has wholly escaped my recollection. And if he had done it, I think I should not easily have forgotten it; nor, I imagine, would those others who were present. Yet I suspect he will hardly find one of them who will say that he *then* expressed himself so indignantly at the idea that Bishop White could 'mistake' the import of a letter, or 'misapprehend' a hint in conversation. And now I ask whether Mr. M'Cabe himself is not of opinion that Bishop White 'mistook the import' of some parts of St. Paul's letters? Or does he carry his adulation so far as to ascribe to the Bishop papal infallibility, and agree with him in condemning the Methodist doctrine of the witness of the Spirit? If he does, it ought to be known. If he does not,—then, if Bishop White could mistake the import of a letter of St. Paul's, why not also of Dr. Coke's? Could Dr. Coke write better than St. Paul, or is it not as important that the true meaning of the latter should be understood, as of the former? But says Mr. M'Cabe, 'Although Bishop White could not understand it, [Dr. Coke's letter,] it will be recollected that Mr. Emory can!!'—This is a very convenient sort of logic, but, fortunately, it is quite as convenient for me as for Mr. M'Cabe; and to show him the weakness of it, I have nothing to do but to retort it:—only applying it to St. Paul's letters, as he does to Dr. Coke's. If Mr. M'Cabe, then, does not agree with Bishop White in his interpretations of St. Paul's letters, is he not guilty of shameful arrogance in presuming to differ from 'such a man as Bishop White?' And is it not worthy of two notes of admiration to say, that, 'although Bishop White could not understand' them, yet it will be recollected that Mr. M'Cabe can!!—Happily for us, however, as St. Paul's letters are before the public, and every man, 'with his own little acquirements,' is at liberty to judge of their import for himself, so is also Dr. Coke's; and I am perfectly content that every man shall exercise this liberty, and have no fears for the consequence.

But if it be a shame for me to suggest that Bishop White might possibly misapprehend a hint in conversation, or mistake the import of a letter, I ask if no blush ought to burn Mr. M'Cabe's face at the indecent outrages which he takes so ferocious a delight in committing at every turn, on the memory of Dr. Coke and Mr. Asbury? I avail myself of this occasion to say, that, for the personal character of Bishop White, I do not doubt that I entertain, in reality, as high a regard at least as Mr. M'Cabe. I have never insinuated, nor for a moment believed, that that venerable man was capable of intentional falsehood. I should disdain the imputation; nor was there a particle of ground for so mischief-making an insinuation.—And although, in replying to an attack on one of our prominent doctrines,—an attack published at a distance from Bishop White's residence, and not originally with his proper signature,—there might possibly have been some expressions which might not have been

used in other circumstances, yet I should exceedingly regret that the Bishop or any of his friends should entertain an idea that any personal hostility or unfriendliness of feeling exists toward him, in my mind. It is not the case. Any excitement which might even then have appeared in that controversy, has, on my part, long since and wholly passed away; and there are few men living, so far as I have ever heard him spoken of, whose personal character I more sincerely respect than that of Bishop White. Yet I entertain at least an equal reverence for the memory and character both of Dr. Coke and Mr. Asbury; and believe them to have been as incapable of falsehood, or of any dishonorable act. I believe, moreover, that Dr. Coke, in particular, was a man of not only equal veracity, and understanding, and honor, but of equal learning; and as capable of explaining his own letter, and his views and design in writing it. And in saying this I am sure that I intend no disparagement of Bishop White, nor the slightest disrespect to him. Mr. M'Caine, however, who affects, just now, such extreme sensitiveness in behalf of Bishop White, seems to have exhausted his whole vocabulary of epithets in heaping obloquy on the memory of Dr. Coke; and not satisfied with imputing to him 'absurdity, artifice, and intrigue,' adds, that it was 'reasonable to suppose' that his colleague was ready to cry out against him, 'treachery, deception, intrigue, and a thousand things besides.' It is hardly presumable that he meant very good things; and thus, in the failure of facts, he resorts to the exuberance of a fancy prolific in blackening character, for the purpose of branding with infamy an old friend, now no more, and who, in devotion to the cause of God and the best interests of man, and in labours and sacrifices to promote them, was unexcelled, we believe, by Bishop White, or any other man living.

The writing of Dr. Coke's letter to Bishop White, I never undertook to justify. He himself lived to see the error of it, and, with his characteristic candour, to acknowledge it. The peculiar circumstances of that period,—and in which, in an unguarded moment, he wrote the letter;—the pains which had been taken to enlist him in the interests of Mr. O'Kelly, and to produce disaffection between him and Mr. Asbury;—the excitement which had thus been produced on his ardent temperament, but which afterward, on his becoming better informed, was wholly removed; and the cordial affection which was restored, and subsequently subsisted, between him and his colleague;—all this has been heretofore stated, and the whole subject fully discussed, in the 'Defence of our Fathers, &c.' Dr. Coke's own explanations have also been given in an 'Appendix, No. I,' to that work. It is unnecessary, therefore, to repeat here what is there said, and remains unshaken by Mr. M'Caine or any one else; and to which we respectfully refer such readers as desire farther satisfaction on this subject, or to revive their acquaintance with its details.

Mr. M'Caine, indeed, is exceedingly fretted that Dr. Bond and others should have pronounced that work an 'unanswerable production:' and in order to counteract the influence of such a judgment, is driven to the necessity of manufacturing 'nonsense' of his own, and attributing it to me. But does he not perceive that, by this course, he establishes the very sentiment which he labours to explode? If the work is answerable, why not answer it fairly, without distorting or perverting it, or descending to low contemptible abuse?—I had stated that if Dr. Coke, with the views which he then entertained, had even submitted to a second episcopal ordination, for the sake of union with the Protestant Episcopal Church, it would by no means have proved that he therefore disclaimed, or even doubted, the validity of his prior ordination. He himself explicitly declared, as is shown in the Appendix to the 'Defence of our Fathers,' that he did believe, and had no doubt, that the repetition of the imposition of hands, in such circumstances, and with the views which he then entertained, would have been perfectly justifiable, and would not by any means have invalidated, or have been an acknowledgment of the nullity of his former consecration. Bishop White, in 'The Case of the Episcopal Churches Considered,' had clearly asserted a similar opinion in regard to reordination in certain cases: and the principle is the same whether applied to the reordination of presbyters or bishops. In order farther to illustrate this view, I remarked,—'It is well known that some Methodist presbyters who have joined other churches, have submitted to a second ordination, not for their own satisfaction, but for the satisfaction of others, and because it was required of them in order to the union.'—On this passage Mr. M'Caine indulges himself in the following strain,—

'Is not this declaration contrary to the universal sense of mankind? According to Mr. E.'s doctrine, when a beggar asks an alms, it is not "for his own satisfaction," but for the satisfaction of the giver, that he asks it! When an applicant solicits a favor, it is not "for his own satisfaction" he solicits it, but for the satisfaction of his benefactor! When a man wishes to become a member of a religious society, it is not "for his own satisfaction" that he wishes to join it, but for the satisfaction of the Church! According to this position, it is the party *applying* who confers the favor, and not the party *bestowing* it. And yet the book containing such nonsense is pronounced "a masterly and unanswerable production."'

But is it not plain that whatever 'nonsense' there is in this statement is purely Mr. M'Caine's own. I never said that, in the cases in which some of our presbyters had joined other churches, their wish to do so was not for their own satisfaction;—but that there had been instances in which *the circumstance of their submitting to a reordination*, was not because they were dissatisfied with their former ordination, or doubted its validity. They would have been willing to go into such other churches, and to continue their ministrations,

without reordination, if it had been admitted on the part of such other churches; and their *submitting* to reordination therefore, was not from any scruples on their mind with regard to their former ordination, but merely a compliance with this term of union, for the satisfaction of those who exacted this condition. This I simply averred as a *fact*. That averment I now repeat, and leave its assailant to make 'nonsense' of it at his leisure.

If Mr. M'Caine cannot imagine any other reason why Dr. Coke pursued the course he did, except a 'love of gain,' actuating his 'sordid soul,'—or else a conviction of the invalidity of his episcopal ordination, we can. And as Dr. Coke himself explicitly assigned other motives, and perfectly upright and honorable ones, we choose rather to believe his declarations than to adopt Mr. M'Caine's insinuations, or assertions. We do think that Dr. Coke understood his own motives as well as Mr. M'Caine can do; and we think him too as worthy of belief. In his letter to the Rev. Ezekiel Cooper, dated January 29, 1808, he expressly says,—'*I have no doubt but my consecration of Bishop Asbury was perfectly valid, and would have been so even if he had been reconsecrated.*'—Yet, says Mr. M'Caine, 'Notwithstanding all Mr. Emory has said respecting Dr. Coke having "no doubt,—not the shadow of a doubt," the Doctor himself *knew* better; *he knew he was no bishop.*'—Mr. M'Caine of course must intend to be understood that Dr. Coke equally knew that Mr. Asbury was no bishop. And then it follows of necessity that to ascertain, as a mere matter of fact, what was Dr. Coke's opinion, we have no alternative but simply to choose which to believe,—Dr. Coke or Mr. M'Caine. Dr. Coke certainly did know that he was no bishop of the Church of England, as by law established; and that his ordination of ministers there, would not be recognised by that creature of the state. Hence his application to the bishop of London, on the same principle as that which was involved in his letter to Bishop White, viz,—to meet the existing prejudices of others, and 'for the enlargement of the field of action.'—Ministers ordained by the bishops of the Protestant Episcopal Church in this country, are not recognised, in virtue thereof, we believe, as ministers of the Church of England. Nay, the bishops of the Protestant Episcopal Church themselves, when in England, are not bishops in that Church, nor allowed to officiate as such.—Whether the Church of England, or the Protestant Episcopal Church in this country, acknowledges our ordination of bishops or not, does not in the slightest degree affect the argument. It might just as well be argued that if these Churches choose not to acknowledge our *presbyters* as such, it must follow that we have no presbyters; for our ordination of presbyters is derived from the same source as that of our bishops, and our form of ordaining presbyters is an abridgment of the Church of England's form of ordaining priests, as that of ordaining superintendents is an abridgment of their form of ordaining bishops. Neither does our adoption of their

form of ordaining bishops prove that we therefore hold bishops to be a third order in the sense that the high church part of those churches do. It has been already shown that many of the most distinguished men of the Church of England have held differently. Of these it is sufficient to name Stillingfleet alone, as his sentiments have been so fully exhibited, and shown to be the sentiments of many others equally eminent, and entirely according with our own. It was perfectly consistent in Mr. Wesley, therefore, as it is in us, though using those forms of ordination, and intending, in the sense so often already explained, to have an order of bishops, as well as of presbyters and deacons, yet to maintain the primary and inherent equality of bishops and presbyters, as originally the same order. The Alexandrian ordination of bishops explains our views, as it does Mr. Wesley's; and Mr. Crowther expressly declares that it was in view of that model that Mr. Wesley acted, in setting apart Dr. Coke, and in sending him to establish the same mode in America.

Mr. M'CABE says, 'According to Mr. E.'s showing, Mr. Wesley recommended the episcopal form of government to his societies in England, as well as to those in Scotland and America. For the same recommendation, and the same forms of ordination, on which Mr. E. so confidently relies, to support the cause of Methodist episcopacy, are in the abridged prayer book which is used by the English Methodists to this day.'—To this I shall only say at present, that I have now before me the abridged prayer book used by the English Methodists,—'the seventh edition,—London; Printed at the Conference Office; by Thomas Cordeux: sold by T. Blanshard, 14 City Road, and 66 Pater Noster Row; and at the Methodist preaching houses in town and country: 1819.'—And in this edition, designed for England, not one of these 'forms of ordination' is contained. On what authority Mr. M'CABE founded his assertion, he does not state. And until he produces some better testimony, I shall choose rather to be guided by the English prayer book lying before me.

We cordially agree 'that conjecture is not argument; and that specious phantasies are very different from logical deductions.' And if 'conjectures' and 'phantasies,' such as can hardly be called even 'specious,' be deducted from Mr. M'CABE's productions, there will be little left, except the dregs of low personalities. That I assigned a variety of considerations, compatible with honorable motives, which might have operated on the mind of Dr. Coke, in the peculiar circumstances of that period, is certainly true; and that I thought it also possible that Bishop White might have misapprehended a hint in conversation, or even the design of a part of Dr. Coke's letter, yet without the slightest imputation of wilful or moral wrong. The difference between Mr. M'CABE and myself in this respect is, not that I indulge in 'conjectures,' and he in none,—no reader can believe this,—but that his all go to blacken Dr. Coke, while mine, were there even no stronger ground of defence, all tend

to show that there is really no necessity for imputing bad motives to that excellent man ; and that there are many very probable and very supposable reasons which might have actuated him, without attributing to him the baseness which Mr. M'Caine tortures a fertile ingenuity to fasten on him. We say that this, to use the mildest terms, is a most uncharitable and cruel course of proceeding, and especially as Dr. Coke is not alive to answer for himself. Such a course is not required by the interests either of Christianity, or of historic verity. Where various motives can be conceived for the acts of a man of such general excellence and devotion as Dr. Coke, even through a long life, and down to death,—persons who are themselves of pure and honorable minds, and under the influence of the true Christian spirit, will choose, we think, to believe the good motive, rather than the bad. Is there a man living who would not consider it an unchristian severity that he himself should be judged by a different rule,—at least after his tongue shall no longer be capable of speaking, nor his hand of writing, in his own defence ? Yet we are far from being under the necessity of resting Dr. Coke's defence on probabilities merely. We have solid argument, authentic documents, the testimony of contemporaries, and clear logical deductions, in addition to his own express declarations, supported as they are by a character for veracity and piety which surely would not disparage the future posthumous fame even of his assailant. The reader, however, will please to observe, that, in refuting the motives which Mr. M'Caine ascribes to Dr. Coke in regard to his letter to Bishop White, we are by no means to be understood as vindicating the writing of it. The act itself, we repeat, was precipitate and unauthorized, and can be apologized for only by a candid consideration of all the peculiarities of the time. It was disapproved by Bishop Asbury, and has been disapproved, so far as we know, by our whole body ; and was ultimately disapproved by Dr. Coke himself.

SECTIONS VII-VIII.—*The Prayer book of 1784 and of 1786.*

We will not weary the patience of readers by following Mr. M'Caine through his perpetual repetitions, insinuations, and hardy reiteration of already refuted sophisms. The two sections above named will be here connected, and, in reviewing them, we shall confine ourselves to such facts as never can be so sophisticated as to hide their true character and bearing from candid and intelligent inquirers. Mr. M'Caine would seem not to be aware that the questions in the 'Defence of our Fathers,' (pp. 42-4,) were intended as a *reductio ad absurdum*, to show that on the grounds assumed by him so many monstrous absurdities were involved, that we could not believe it possible that even his own most devoted admirers could have the credulity to swallow them. This bearing we should think was still more obvious, when, after the last of the questions, this passage was added,—

'Such a complicated machinery of fraud and villany must have been kept in operation on the part of Dr. Coke; such a combination and collusion of all parties against Mr. Wesley, must have been carried on for so long a time; and such surprising ignorance must have existed on his part, for the accomplishment of all this, as is, we must confess, beyond the reach of our highest credulity.'

And if the reader will have the goodness to turn to those questions again, we shall be entirely satisfied to leave the decision of them to his own good sense.—That they were 'ushered in' with the form proper to the nature of that species of argument, could not be an objection to any one who did not feel their graveling force, or was capable of fairly answering them. We would just remark, by the way, that Mr. M'Caine says, 'Out of the nine questions which Mr. E. has proposed,' &c.—But he ought to have perceived that there are eleven questions: and the 10th and 11th, we dare say, were not found the easiest to be answered.

It has already been shown, (in the 'Defence of our Fathers,') that an episcopal form of government, such as *we* contend for, is perfectly consistent with the position that bishops and presbyters were primarily and inherently the same order; and that this was incontestably Mr. Wesley's opinion: since *after* he was convinced that bishops and presbyters were the same order, he declared that he still believed the episcopal form of church government to be scriptural and apostolical. It has been farther shown, that he did himself, with the assistance of other presbyters, set apart Dr. Coke as a superintendent over the flock of Christ in America: and that this was done with such solemnities as all persons acquainted with the facts, except Mr. M'Caine, so far as we have ever heard, have always considered to have been intended by Mr. Wesley as an ordination. It has been shown also, that he prepared and sent over to us by Dr. Coke, three distinct forms of ordination: that these were printed at his own press, and were thus entitled,

'The first—"The form and manner of making of DEACONS." And the running title at the head of the page is, "*The ordaining of deacons.*"

The second—"The form and manner of ordaining of ELDERS." The running title is, "*The ordaining of elders.*"

The third—"The form of *ordaining* of a SUPERINTENDENT." And the running title is, "*The ordination of superintendents.*"

These acts of Mr. Wesley were understood and represented, down to the era of Mr. M'Caine's 'History and Mystery,' as intending the institution of an *episcopacy in fact*. It was so considered, both by his friends, and by his enemies. He was himself gibed, taunted, and reviled for it, from that period (1784) till the day of his death, in 1791. And his memory has been often reproached with it since, by those who have sought occasion against him. Now if Mr. Wesley had not intended any such thing, had he not sense enough to say so? Had he not spirit enough to say so?

Nay, was it not his duty to say so? And if, in such circumstances, he did not say so, when it was thus urgently pressed upon him from so many quarters, and even by his own brother, could we wish stronger evidence that it was because he neither could deny, nor wished to deny, that he had so intended; nor would he attempt to sophisticate it as Mr. M'Caine has done. Were it even certain that, in the organization of a distinct Church in America, he went farther than he would have gone if he had anticipated the act of the Conference of 1787, in leaving his name off the minutes, (as it has been called,) or that, under the chafing influence of that act, he was, as Dr. Coke thought when he wrote to Bishop White, even 'sorry for the separation,'—yet this certainly does not prove that he had not intended such a distinct Church organization in America. Mr. M'Caine's argument on this point is so odd a one that we cannot deny to the reader the amusement of seeing it.—'If [saye he] Mr. Wesley was sorry for the separation, was he not also sorry for having taken the steps that led to it? Was he not sorry for having ordained ministers for America?' (*Defence of History and Mystery*, p. 63.)—What then? Admitting even, for argument sake, that Mr. Wesley, in the peculiar circumstances which existed at that time, was sorry that he had taken those steps, does this prove that he had not taken them? Or if his subsequent but temporary regret ought to induce us now to abolish our episcopacy, ought it not equally to induce us to abolish our ordination altogether? The reader cannot but perceive that Mr. M'Caine's over heated zeal against Methodist episcopacy, goes as completely, on his mode of reasoning, to subvert our ordination entirely. And yet he has the inconsistency to continue to claim authority under it.

That there is good reason to believe that Mr. Wesley, as well as Dr. Coke, lived to overcome the feelings produced by the act of the Conference of 1787, and the prejudices which certain mischief makers, about that period, industriously endeavoured to infuse into his mind against Mr. Asbury, has heretofore been shown, and need not be repeated. The esteem in which he continued to hold Dr. Coke, the honorable appointments which he gave him, and the high trusts reposed in him, even by his last will and testament, never can be reconciled with Mr. M'Caine's representations, without supposing such a degree of ignorance, or of inconsistency, on the part of Mr. Wesley, as we should not choose to impute to him. That he had been misinformed in regard to Mr. Asbury's 'strutting,' &c, is too well known in *America* to require a moment's discussion. If ever a human being, with such powers and means, lived a life of toil, of self denial, and of unostentatious simplicity,—even to a proverb,—it was *Francis Asbury*. And both he and Dr. Coke having ceased their apostolical and almost unexampled labours, only with their lives, and sealed their sincerity and devotedness with little less than the blood of martyrs, we can scarcely conceive of any thing more dispraisible than the efforts made by

some, under the profession of Christianity, to despoil them, now that they are in their graves, of a reputation so dearly and faithfully earned. To those who think it a light matter thus to abuse them, we recommend the answer of Mr. Snethen to an insinuation of the late Mr. O'Kelly that Mr. Asbury always kept 'behind the screen.'

'This is he, Mr. O'Kelly says in his preface, "who always keeps behind the screen." During those unhappy divisions which rent the bosom of the society in Charleston, Mr. Asbury visited it annually; and he has not spent less than one twelfth of his time in Virginia, since the division by Mr. O'Kelly. The rest of his time he has indeed been behind the screen, that is, out of sight of the societies in Charleston and Virginia. But what has he been doing behind the screen? How did he spend his time there? One might follow him behind the screen to the banks of Kennebeck in the east; to the borders of the lakes to the north; over the Alleghany and Cumberland mountains to the west; and over the Savannah river to the south. These are the screens which have hidden Mr. Asbury from his brethren and from his enemies in Virginia. Mr. O'Kelly was never behind those screens; he knows not what has been done, is doing, or to be done there. But many of our preachers know that the Bishop has more to do and to suffer there, than in those settlements where a man has a plentiful table every day to eat at, and a good bed every night, and a ceiled room to sleep in. If Mr. O'Kelly would leave his beloved haunts through the midlands of North Carolina and Virginia, and take one round behind those screens; if he would travel faint and weary, over the rocks of the north and the hills of the west; if he should have to encamp a few nights on the bare ground, cold and wet, at Richland creek, the Hazel patch, and Cumberland river; if he should be crowded in a hut with a parcel of hunters, and promiscuous travellers; I think he would then have new ideas, and be able to expose Methodist episcopacy in a much juster light than he has yet done.'—*Answer to James O'Kelly's Vindication*, pp. 6-7.

The hardy and persevering boldness with which some of our opponents assume, in this controversy, the authority of Mr. Wesley's name and opinions, cannot but amaze those who are acquainted with the truth of Methodist history. Nothing can be farther from the views of that eminent man, or from the 'primitive' Methodist economy, than their plans. Mr. Moore, in his biography, has produced the most incontestable testimony, that Mr. Wesley, who had so long and so beneficially exercised a personal superintendency in the government of his societies, was desirous of perpetuating, after his death, a similar general superintendency, both of the preachers and of the societies. His opinion of the indispensable necessity of this seems to have been, indeed, much stronger than our own, or than subsequent experience has justified. Probably his own views on this point were modified before his death. His establishing, by the Deed of Declaration, in the year 1784, the Conference of one hundred preachers, as the legal Conference of the people called Methodists, was with a special view to the securing of the chapels,

and the appointing of the preachers to their pulpits, agreeably to the purposes for which they had been erected, and to the trust deeds. This was a matter which rested on Mr. Wesley's mind with great weight.

'That men, [says Mr. Moore,] not a few of whom have departed from the society, (and some have been expelled from it,) should merely by virtue of their legal authority over the premises, appoint preachers to feed and guide the flock, exhibited a distressing prospect. Even where the trustees continued members of the society, and attached to its interests, what could be expected in a matter of such vital concern from men so much engaged in worldly business? This has often been proved in religious communities. It was the chief cause of the decline of religion among the latter Puritans: their lay elders assumed, after some time, the whole authority. From this proceeded that worldly spirit and political zeal which so greatly dishonored that work in its last days; and which had previously overthrown both church and state. We see also, in our day, in the sufferings of the excellent Scott, as detailed in his Memoirs, lately published, what both ministers and people have to expect from such a system of lay government.

The evil showed itself in prominent overt acts previous to this period. Mr. Wesley having striven to prevail on some trustees in Yorkshire to settle their chapels, so that the people might continue to hear the same truths, and be under the same discipline as heretofore, was assailed with calumny and with the most determined opposition, as though he intended to make the chapels his own! Another set of trustees, in the same county, absolutely refused to settle a lately erected chapel; and, in the issue, engaged Mr. Wesley's book steward in London, who had been an itinerant preacher, to come to them as their minister. This man, however, was "wise in his generation;" and insisted upon having an income of sixty pounds per annum, with the chapel house to live in, settled upon him during his life, before he would relinquish his place under Mr. Wesley. What will not party spirit do! I was a witness, when after Mr. Wesley's death it was found that the preachers continued united and faithful in their calling, how deeply those men repented of their conduct in this instance. In vain they represented to the man of their unhappy choice how lamentably their congregations had declined, and how hardly they could sustain the expenses they had incurred. The answer was short: they might employ other preachers if they should think it proper; but the dwelling house and the stated income belonged to him!"—*Life of Wesley*, book viii, chap. i.

'In that day of uncertainty and surmise there were not wanting some, even among the itinerant preachers, who entertained fears respecting a settlement of this kind. They had but little hope that the work would continue after Mr. Wesley's death as it had during his life; and they thought it probable that the largest societies, and, of course, the principal chapels, would become independent. In such a case, the favor of the chief men, and especially of the trustees, would insure considerable advantages to those itinerants who might wish to

become settled ministers. Of all this Mr. Wesley was fully aware, and he determined to counteract such wisdom. He found it, however, very difficult to do so, without breaking with them, which love forbade; or assuming, in a questionable case, an authority contrary to that of a father in Christ. One of those preachers, and of considerable eminence, attacked the deed of settlement, and declared, that Mr. Wesley might as justly place all the dwelling houses, barns, workshops, &c, in which he had preached for so many years, under the authority of the Conference, as he had done the chapels, and that he thus assumed an authority that the Lord had not given him. This seemed far too strong to be generally received, and it was quickly answered. A preacher, in reply, observed, "that, certainly, there was as much justice in the one case as the other, provided those dwelling houses, barns, workshops, &c, had been built in consequence of the preaching, and by the subscriptions of the connexion; and in order that those erections might continue to be used for the purposes for which they were thus built. This closed the debate for that time; but the preacher first mentioned, soon after he had got to his circuit, rallied again, and wrote Mr. Wesley a long and earnest expostulation on the same subject, which I read to him in course. To this Mr. Wesley thus shortly replied:

"MY DEAR BROTHER,—I do not love to dispute; and, least of all, to dispute with *you*, who will dispute through a stone wall. It seems a little thing with *you*, who shall appoint the preachers; with me it is, under God, every thing, both for the prosperity and the continuance of the work."—He concluded with some fatherly advice, not to be so very sure of his own opinion, or so wise in his own conceit.—*1b.*

That Mr. Wesley had been desirous, and had made an effort, to provide a successor to fill his place in the general superintendency of the preachers and societies, when the Lord should call him to his reward, is expressly attested by his biographer, Mr. Moore. To secure this object, he was even desirous of associating an individual with him, in his own lifetime, that such an associate, travelling and labouring with him, as a father in God, might thus be built up in faith, ripened in gifts, and introduced to the people.

'Mr. Wesley [says Mr. Moore] now saw the religious societies he had been the happy instrument of forming spread rapidly on every side; and the preachers increasing in an equal proportion. He became, therefore, every day more solicitous to provide for their unity and permanency after his decease, wishing to preserve at the same time the original doctrines and economy of the Methodists. From the beginning he had stood at the head of the connexion, and by the general suffrage had acted as a father in matters relating to the government of the societies. He had often found that all his authority was necessary in order to unanimity, and he wished that authority to be continued.'

In January 1773, being at Shoreham, where, no doubt, says Mr. Moore, he had consulted Mr. Perronet on the subject, he wrote a letter to Mr. Fletcher, whom, of all men, he thought the most

proper to fill his place when the Lord should remove him, pressing and entreating him, without conferring with flesh and blood, to come out into the work as a general assistant, and thus to strengthen the hands, comfort the heart, and share the labour of his affectionate friend and brother, and be prepared to take his place when God should call him hence. See Moore's Life of Wesley, book vii, chap. iii.

The following was Mr. Fletcher's answer :—

“ *Madeley, 6th Feb., 1773.*

REVEREND AND DEAR SIR,—I hope the Lord, who has so wonderfully stood by you hitherto, will preserve you to see many of your sheep, and *me* among the rest, enter into rest. Should Providence call you *first*, I shall do my best, by the Lord's assistance, to help *your brother* to gather the wreck, and keep together those who are not absolutely bent upon throwing away the Methodist doctrine or discipline, as soon as he that now letteth shall be removed out of their way. Every little help will then be necessary; and I hope I shall not be backward to throw in my mite.

In the mean time, you stand sometimes in need of an assistant to serve tables, and occasionally to fill up a gap. Providence visibly appointed me to that office many years ago: and though it no less evidently called me here, yet I have not been without doubt, especially for some years past, whether it would not be expedient that I should resume my place as your deacon; not with any view of presiding over the Methodists after you, (God knows!) but to save you a little in your old age, and be in the way of receiving, and perhaps of doing more good. I have sometimes considered, how shameful it was that no clergyman should join you, to keep in the Church the work which the Lord had enabled you to carry on therein; and, as the little estate I have in my native country is sufficient for my maintenance, I have thought I would one day or other offer you and the Methodists my *free* services.

While my love of retirement, and my dread of appearing upon a higher stage than that I stand upon here, made me linger, I was providentially called to do something in Lady Huntingdon's plan; but being shut out there, it appears to me I am again called to my first work.

Nevertheless, I would not leave this place without a *fuller* persuasion that the time is quite come. Not that God uses me much *now* among my parishioners, but because I have not sufficiently cleared my conscience from the blood of all men, especially with regard to ferreting out the poor, and expostulating with the rich, who make it their business to fly from me. In the mean time it shall be my employment to beg the Lord to give me light, to guide me by his counsel, and make me willing to go any where, or no where, to be any thing, or nothing.

I have laid my pen aside for some time; nevertheless I resumed it last week, at your brother's request, to go on with my treatise on *Christian Perfection*. I have made some alteration in the sheets you

have seen, and hope to have a few more ready for your correction against the time you come this way.

How deep is the subject! What need have I of 'the Spirit to search the deep things of God?' Help me by your prayers, till you can help me by word of mouth.

Reverend and dear sir,

Your willing, though unprofitable, servant in the gospel,

J. FLETCHER."

It is worthy of remark that, in this amiable letter, so deeply imbued with all that spirit of humility and modesty for which Mr. Fletcher was so eminently distinguished, there is not the slightest objection to the principle contained in Mr. Wesley's proposal, nor does Mr. Fletcher make the least attempt to dissuade him from the measure which he then had in contemplation; which, as an intimate friend and counsellor, he ought to have done, and doubtless would have done, had his judgment been decidedly against it. On the contrary, the grounds on which he waived (for it can hardly be said that he positively refused) the invitation of Mr. Wesley, were in explicit reference to his own peculiar views of himself, and the circumstances in which he conceived Providence had placed him, together with his graceful deference to what he judged the superior claims of the Rev. Charles Wesley, to be the leader of the flock after the death of his brother John. Mr. Fletcher knew well, as Mr. Wesley also did, that there were individuals who only waited for that event as a favorable opportunity for the accomplishment of their meditated innovations on the established economy of Methodism; yet he was so far from being disposed to yield them the slightest countenance or aid, that though, for the reasons above stated, he declined to become himself the official associate and the eventual successor of Mr. Wesley in maintaining and preserving it, yet he avowed his readiness, in the contingency of Mr. Wesley's being first called away, to do his 'best, by the Lord's assistance,' to help another in that great work. We wish not, however, to be understood to intimate that the opinions of Mr. Wesley, or Mr. Fletcher, or of any other uninspired man, are absolutely conclusive, on this or any other subject. Yet from a candid review of the above facts, and of the whole field over which we have ranged in this discussion, nothing can be plainer than that our opponents have not a shadow of pretext for pressing into their service the venerated names of Wesley and Fletcher; and that, in truth, it is doing them great injustice to force them into so incongruous and unnatural an alliance with projects which go absolutely, *radically*, to subvert the very basis of that economy which was so dear to those enlightened and holy men, and which Mr. Wesley in particular devoted his whole heart, and life, to establish. One of the last wishes of Mr. Fletcher also, in connexion with Methodism, was, that Madeley (his parish) might be put into the minutes as a regular circuit, on the established plan, and that he might be appointed

there as a supernumerary. This he expressed in 1784, the year before his death. And Mr. Moore asserts, that though he could not be easily persuaded to take the office which Mr. Wesley wished him to take, yet he certainly would have taken a most decided part in the work, if his total loss of health, which obliged him to leave his parish and to retire to Switzerland, had not prevented it.

Mr. M'Caine is very fond of imputing to others 'shuffling prevarication,' 'palpable contradiction,' 'gross deception,' and 'little tricks.' We shall not render railing for railing, but shall simply say that either his mind is most strangely confused on the subjects on which he writes, or else the errors into which he leads his readers are very unaccountable ones. In his 'History and Mystery' he had asserted that Dr. Coke, on his return to Europe, in 1785, was impeached before the British Conference, and punished by Mr. Wesley by the omission of his name in the minutes for the succeeding year; and that this was done on account of 'the manner in which the Doctor discharged the duties of the new office he was appointed to fill, and the title of bishop which he assumed, in connexion with Mr. Asbury in their joint address to General Washington, President of the American Congress.'—*History and Mystery*, p. 62, &c.

In reply, I stated that this was 'an entire mistake.' In defending the 'truth as set forth in the History and Mystery,' Mr. M'Caine repeats a quotation from Mr. Drew on this subject, and then exultingly adds,—'The very words I had quoted, and which he [Mr. Emory] says was an entire *mistake*?'—But is it possible that he could have understood me to mean that his entire mistake consisted in making a wrong quotation? Was it not perfectly clear that my allegation was that his representation of the *facts*, with their *causes* and *date*, was an entire mistake? It matters not what his authority was, nor how quoted. The statement itself was wrong; although Mr. M'Caine was so strangely full of it, and so pertinaciously bent on making the worst of it, as to be absolutely blinded, it would seem, to the most palpable anachronisms. He even made it the ground of a charge of forgery,—alleging that the date of the Address to 'President' Washington had been corruptly altered from 1785 to 1789;—and insinuated that the object of this fraud was to screen Mr. Asbury, in the alarm which he might be supposed to have felt, on 'hearing of the punishment inflicted on Dr. Coke.'—And will any one still persist in contending that all this farrago was not 'an entire mistake'?

But on this subject I had also said, 'At this very Conference of 1785, Dr. Coke's name appears in the British Minutes, after John and Charles Wesley themselves.' To this Mr. M'Caine answers,—'And what if it does? Does that prove the "*mistake*?" Really I always thought, that the "succeeding year" after 1785 was 1786. The very year I said Dr. Coke's name was left off the British Minutes.'—Now, although Mr. M'Caine 'really always thought that the "succeeding year" after 1785 was 1786,' we must beg his allow-

ance to say that this specious sophism, however it may have misled himself, does not mislead us, nor can it, we think, intelligent readers. The time at which Mr. M'Caine alleged that Dr. Coke had been impeached before the British Conference, and punished by Mr. Wesley by the omission of his name in the Minutes, was on his return from America to the British Conference held in July 1785.—Now *we* always thought that the 'succeeding year' from that time, was the period from then till the ensuing Conference in July 1786: and this period, in regard to the stations, which is the point in question, was expressed by the Minutes of 1785. It was *then*, therefore, viz. in the Minutes of the stations from July 1785, to July 1786, that Dr. Coke's name would have been omitted, if that omission was inflicted as a punishment in consequence of any impeachment at the Conference of 1785. To suppose that though impeached and censured at the Conference of 1785, yet that it was not then that his name would have been omitted, (if such was the punishment adjudged,) but in the Minutes for July 1786, extending to July 1787, is perfectly preposterous; and is well known to be utterly contrary to the usages of the Methodist Conferences.—And we repeat that in the British Minutes of July 1785, extending to July 1786, the 'succeeding year' after Dr. Coke's alleged impeachment, (as erroneously represented by Mr. M'Caine,) his name does appear in one of the most important appointments, and next after John and Charles Wesley.

But why does Mr. M'Caine persist in thus confusing his readers on this point? His words were,—'The manner in which the Doctor discharged the duties of the new office he was appointed to fill, and the title of bishop which he assumed, in connexion with Mr. Asbury in their joint Address to General Washington, President of the American Congress, involved him in difficulties, not only with Mr. Wesley and the British Conference, as we have seen already, but with the American Conference also. We have stated, that upon his return to Europe in 1785, he was impeached before the Conference, and his name was left out of their Minutes for one year.'—*History and Mystery*, p. 62.—And is it not absolutely certain that 1786 could not be the year of that omission? not only for the reasons above stated, but also because it is impossible that the Address to General Washington could have been presented before 1789, till which time he was not President of the United States.—In calling Mr. M'Caine's representation of this matter therefore an 'entire mistake,' we used a phraseology, the mildness of which, in forbearance toward him, did not deserve his censure.

We distinctly deny that Dr. Coke was under censure of any description for the year expressed by the stations in the British minutes of 1786. There is no evidence within our knowledge that any impeachment was preferred against him, on any ground, at that Conference. Mr. M'Caine has certainly produced none, and has no right to assume such a fact. On the contrary, we have shown that

in 1786, Dr. Coke was appointed by Mr. Wesley to visit the societies in British America; that his name appears in the minutes published by Mr. Wesley in the *Arminian Magazine* for that year; and that previously to his sailing for America, he attended and presided in the Irish Conference in that same year 1786, by Mr. Wesley's direction, and as his representative. *Defence of our Fathers*, p. 43. In the work just quoted it was also shown that there were the strongest reasons to believe that Mr. Wesley had seen Dr. Coke's Journal of his proceedings in the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church in America, previously to that period; and that it was manifestly absurd to suppose, if Dr. Coke had acted fraudulently in that affair, that he would not have wished to conceal it; or, if he wished to conceal it, that he should have published in London both the minutes of his proceedings, and also his Journal containing the account of them, with a dedication to Mr. Wesley himself.

We have since obtained positive proof that Mr. Wesley had seen Dr. Coke's Journal; and it would seem that Dr. Coke must, in fact, have himself transmitted it to him, and with a promptness indeed remarkable, and utterly inconsistent with the idea of any consciousness of a fraudulent violation of Mr. Wesley's instructions. The proof to which we allude is contained in a letter from Mr. Wesley to the late Rev. Freeborn Garrettson, published in the *Life of Mr. Garrettson*, by the Rev. Dr. Bangs. It is dated 'Dublin, June 16, 1785,' and commences thus,—'My dear brother,—Dr. Coke gives some account of you in his Journal; so that although I have not seen you, I am not a stranger to your character.' (*Life of Garrettson*, p. 163.) The date of this letter of Mr. Wesley is given above as it stands in the printed copy of the *Life of Garrettson*. Knowing, however, from the period at which Dr. Coke left the United States to return to England, (viz. on the 3d of June, 1785,) that he could not have arrived there, nor consequently have had an opportunity personally to present his Journal to Mr. Wesley so early as the 16th, we were apprehensive that, in the date of the letter, there had probably been either some error of the press, or in the manuscript copy which had been transcribed from the original. To ascertain this with certainty we addressed a note to Miss Garrettson, who has possession of the papers of her late venerable father, requesting her to have the goodness to examine Mr. Wesley's original letter, and to oblige us by a communication of the result. The following is the reply with which she has politely favored us.

'Rhinebeck, Saturday, Jan. 23, 1830.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,—I did not receive yours of the 11th instant [sent by private conveyance] until yesterday afternoon, which must account to you for my apparent negligence in delaying to answer your inquiry.

In referring to Mr. Wesley's letter, I find there is a slight mistake in the printed copy, and that the original document is dated "Dub-

lin, June 26, 1785." The mistake probably originated in the copyist, and not in the printer, as the illegibility of Mr. Wesley's hand writing rendered it difficult to transcribe his letters correctly.

Respectfully yours,

M. R. GARRETTSON.'

Those who possess the *Life of Garrettson*, are requested to note the above error, and to correct it in the margin. We have not been able to ascertain, either from Dr. Coke's Journals, or from his *Life* by Mr. Drew, at what time he reached England, on his return from his first visit to America. As he was delayed, however, by calms, a week or more even after he took ship, it is very improbable that he could have reached Mr. Wesley by the 26th of June, the day of Mr. Wesley's writing to Mr. Garrettson from Dublin; and we therefore still think that Dr. Coke must have transmitted his Journal previously to his own return, since Mr. Wesley's letter makes it absolutely certain that he had seen it. And in the same Journal of Dr. Coke in which are found the allusions to Mr. Garrettson, of which Mr. Wesley speaks, is contained the account of the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

In the *Life of Garrettson*, (p. 169,) we have also additional evidence that Dr. Coke was not under the censure of Mr. Wesley in the year 1786; and there is there, in fact, a most honorable reason assigned why he was sent to America for that year, and was not appointed in England. It is in a letter from Mr. Wesley to Mr. Garrettson, dated 'London, Sept. 30, 1786,' in which Mr. Wesley says,—

'MY DEAR BROTHER,—I trust before this comes to hand, you and Dr. Coke will have met and refreshed each other's bowels in the Lord. I can exceedingly ill spare him from England, as I have no clergyman capable of supplying his lack of service; but I was convinced he was more wanted in America than in Europe. For it is impossible but offences will come, and of yourselves will men arise speaking perverse things, and striving to draw away disciples after them. It is a wonderful blessing they are restrained so long, till the poor people are a little grounded in the faith. You have need to watch over them with your might.'—*Life of Garrettson*, p. 169.

Mr. Wesley's prophecy was not less applicable to the United States than to Nova Scotia, where Mr. Garrettson then was.

The truth is that Mr. M'Caine, in his over anxiety, continually overleaps his prey. He wishes to prove that the venerable men who were concerned in the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church, were knaves, when, if his statements be true, it must follow that they had not sense enough to be knaves;—they could have been no other than idiots; and idiocy, even in a court of law, is an available plea against a charge of knavery. If a document had been publicly presented to a President of the United States in the year 1785, published in the newspapers, carried across the Atlantic, and made the ground of an impeachment in the British Conference, would any but idiots have thought of attempting so

soon after as in the year 1789, to forge a false date for such a document, and by this stupid act to palm it on the world as relating to an event just then occurred? Again, Mr. M'Caine wishes to prove that Mr. Wesley regarded the acts of Dr. Coke and Mr. Asbury, in our Church organization, as a fraudulent imposition of a form of government which he never intended. Yet, as if destined always to refute himself, he informs us, though unaware it would seem of the bearing of the fact, that in Dr. Coke's second visit in 1787, he brought instructions with him from Mr. Wesley, in which Mr. Wesley said to him,—'Put as few things as possible to vote. If you, [Dr. Coke,] brother Asbury, and brother Whatcoat, are agreed, it is sufficient.' Could stronger evidence have been given of the continued confidence which Mr. Wesley reposed both in Dr. Coke and Mr. Asbury, and of his exalted opinion both of their judgment and integrity? Here is proof positive, and furnished by Mr. M'Caine himself, that Mr. Wesley wished Dr. Coke and Mr. Asbury to exercise even *more power* than they did exercise; which he certainly would not have done, if he had regarded them as having already 'surreptitiously' grasped too much, and as acting the part of fraudulent knaves in what they had already assumed.

Another instance of the astonishing propensity of our opponent to imagine fraud where no one else would ever dream of it, is in what he says of the alleged mutilation of Mr. Wesley's letter of Sept. 10, 1784, by the omission of that part of it which contained his recommendation of the use of the liturgy. Now what other man could imagine that that omission, in the publications of a later period, proceeded from a fraudulent intention to conceal Mr. Wesley's recommendation of the abridged common prayer book, when two editions of that prayer book itself were published and circulated, with Mr. Wesley's recommendation in its front?—Would not a candid inquirer rather infer that that recommendation was subsequently omitted, in other publications, because the prayer book, on trial, was found not to be acceptable in this country? Would Mr. M'Caine wish that the continued use of it should have been forced upon the preachers and people? or that we should exhibit the incongruity of continuing the recommendation, after the prayer book itself, by common consent, was laid aside? In fact, if the reader will look into the small volume of Minutes published in 1795, he will find that this very document, with the omission, for the reason no doubt above mentioned, of the recommendation of the liturgy for the Lord's day and for Wednesdays and Fridays, is published as an '*Extract of a letter from the Rev. Mr. John Wesley.*' And when it shall have been shown that the publication of such an '*extract,*' in such a case, was a corrupt and fraudulent mutilation, it will be time enough to notice it farther.*

* In the Appendix to Mr. M'Caine's '*History and Mystery,*' he has mentioned the name of the late Rev. Freeborn Garrettson, as one of the members of the Conference of 1784, to whom he had addressed one of his let-

Mr. M'Caine, indeed, is not content with imputing the concealment of documents to our excellent 'Fathers' on this side the Atlantic. His amazing zeal in this way carries him to the other side, and implicates the venerable Henry Moore in the same condemnation; and he 'strongly suspects,' 'if' all the papers are yet in existence, and 'if' they were accessible, that there are other documents which would blast us more completely still? What can stand against such logic, or such charity?

The residue of his remarks, under the title of the two sections here reviewed, have either been so fully met before, or are really so trifling or irrelevant, that we cannot consent to tax either our own patience or the reader's, by following them farther. In regard to the error respecting the date of Mr. Charles Wesley's death, and his stations previously, a full explanation was given in the *Christian Advocate and Journal* for June 13, 1828, and need not be here repeated. That Mr. M'Caine should still dwell on such a point, with that explanation before him, argues at least a lamentable dearth of better matter. He states, moreover, that I intimated 'in the same paragraph' that he (Mr. M'Caine) 'asserted that the Doctor's [Coke's] name was left off [the British Minutes] in 1789.' But I intimated no such thing, though he might indeed be glad if I had. This was my own statement of the real date of that circumstance, and is the 'truth,'—a thing which, in this controversy, Mr. M'Caine has very rarely happened to 'set forth.'

We have no desire to disturb the opinions of Mr. 'Edward Dromgoole, senior,' or of Mr. 'Jona. Forrest;' nor do we perceive how the extracts of their letters are of any consequence in the argument. The question is not as to the understanding of those gentlemen. For this we cannot be accountable. We have not said that there was any proposition in the Conference of 1784 for 'receiving the prayer book and episcopacy connected:' nor that Mr. Wesley's recommendation of the prayer book obliged the preachers to use it for prayers on 'Wednesdays and Fridays,' or any other days. But whether the ordination of Dr. Coke as a general superintendent, agreeably to the form prepared by Mr. Wesley, and sent and recommended to us in the prayer book, with instructions to set apart Mr. Asbury agreeably to the same form, and its obvious design for the successive ordinations of such presiding church officers in perpetuity, distinct from the forms for the ordaining of deacons and presbyters, did not demonstrate Mr. Wesley's wish for the institutors of inquiry, in preparing his materials for that work. Whatever may have been Mr. Garrettson's sentiments on some inferior points of ecclesiastical polity, or in regard to the act of the Conference of 1787 in rescinding the resolution respecting Mr. Wesley's authority, (of which we believe he did not approve,) we are certain that he very highly disapproved Mr. M'Caine's publication. He repeatedly declared this to different persons in this city, and seemed, in fact, to be very much grieved and distressed that his name should have been in any way connected with a work so painful to his feelings, and so contrary to his views.

tion and perpetuation of such an office and of such officers among us, every man of intelligence, who is acquainted with the facts and with the documents, must be as competent to judge for himself, as Mr. Dromgoole or Mr. Forrest. And whether such an office be called an episcopacy, or a general superintendency, and the officers filling it bishops, or general superintendents, is to us a matter of perfect indifference. The thing, by whatever name it may be called, incontestably remains the same; and, to use a favorite phrase of Mr. M'Caine's, it will be difficult to make any man of common honesty and common sense, believe otherwise. The extract of the letter from the Rev. Thomas Ware, whom we have the pleasure to know, contains a passage both candid and sensible, and very much in point. And when it is recollected that the inquiry is not as to the *title* by which Mr. Wesley wished our bishops or our episcopacy to be designated, but as to the office or thing itself, substantively and in fact, there is nothing in Mr. Ware's letter which in the slightest degree impugns our positions; but very much that strengthens and supports them, and shows the honesty and good faith with which our fathers, and himself among them, acted. In what shape Mr. M'Caine proposed his inquiries to Mr. Dromgoole, Mr. Forrest, and Mr. Ware, does not appear, except from the tenor of the 'mutilated' answers, if extracts be mutilations. It has never been contended by us, however, that the abridged prayer book, if regarded merely in reference to the *prayers* contained in it, was a recommendation of episcopacy; but that the *forms of ordination* contained in it, as prepared by Mr. Wesley for our use, and recommended in common with the rest of the book, were a recommendation of such an institution in *fact*, though not in *name*. From this view we very much doubt whether Mr. Ware would dissent; and the following testimony, contained in his letter of December 1828, is highly satisfactory.

'I am fully persuaded [says Mr. Ware] the preachers in 1784 believed they were acting in accordance with the will of Mr. Wesley, when they adopted the episcopal form or the plan of general superintendency.' Here Mr. Ware obviously speaks of 'the episcopal form' or 'the plan of general superintendency,' as one and the same in substance and in fact. He then adds, '*This plan we know Mr. Wesley approved, and we called it episcopal.*' He adds also that he 'did not believe Mr. Wesley wished us to give it that *appellation.*' This may be. Yet this is not the question, nor in any way material to it.*

Mr. M'Caine's *law*, we incline to think, is not much better than his logic, or than his suspicions. We have now been in possession of our episcopacy, as heretofore explained, for nearly fifty years; and have hitherto defended it against all assailants. This gentle-

* How has it happened that Mr. M'Caine has not informed us what Mr. Garrettson said to him in reference to the prayer book, and Mr. Wesley's recommendation of episcopacy?

man thinks he has recently discovered that it was 'surreptitiously' obtained, and originated in falsehood, forgery, and fraud. Now we humbly apprehend, with all becoming deference, that, in these circumstances, the burden of proving these high charges does rest on him; and that, so far as principles of law are concerned, our title must be presumed to be good till shown to be otherwise: and if Mr. M'Caine, who institutes the action against us, has no better proof for ousting us than has hitherto been adduced, we have no fear to abide the decision of the country.

We shall conclude this point with the sentiments expressed, on a similar occasion, by the Rev. Nicholas Snethen, in reply to certain objections of the late Mr. O'Kelly. The latter, taunting Mr. Snethen as the champion of Methodist episcopacy, had said,—'He must strive to prove his episcopacy.' Mr. Snethen answered,—'Must he indeed! He is in regular possession of it; and if Mr. O'Kelly can, let him disprove it—Mr. O'Kelly acknowledges the validity of the episcopacy, by continuing to exercise the ministerial functions which he received by the imposition of the bishop's hands.' *Answer to James O'Kelly's Vindication of his Apology*, p. 38.—*Mutato nomine*, &c;—only change the names, and the objection and the answer are the same still.

(To be continued.)

REVIEW OF THE CHRISTIAN SPECTATOR'S STRICTURES ON DOCTOR ADAM CLARKE'S DISCOURSES.

THE conductors of the Christian Spectator, in reviewing a series of strictures on their work, by one of their own denomination, the Rev. Dr. Tyler, of Portland, (Me.) complain that Dr. Tyler has animadverted on them in a manner calculated to create in the minds of hundreds who will never see their review, the settled conviction that they maintain opinions which they have unequivocally disclaimed. This, they say, has excited in their minds no small degree of surprise; but they suppose none of their readers will think they ought to remain silent under such imputations. And they then add, that if forced, in this respect, to give a personal or polemical aspect to their discussions, they may say, with the great orator of antiquity, in a similar case, 'He who has arraigned us before the tribunal of the public, is justly to be considered as the cause.' It is not our design to express any opinion as to the merits of the case between Dr. Tyler and the Christian Spectator, or to meddle in the discussions between our Congregational brethren; though it were to be wished that they could agree among themselves before they assail us. Our only object in referring at present to the above passages is, to request the gentlemen of the Christian Spectator to bear in mind the principles which they have laid down for their own protection, and to consider whether we may not be equally entitled to their benefit. They certainly cannot face the public and charge us with commencing this discussion

between our respective journals, or with originating its offensive aspect. They do, indeed, in their March number, talk of our '*assailing them,*' with '*violence,*' and employing '*abuse*' by way of answer to their statements! And instead of having the candour to acknowledge that we have refuted even a tittle of their article, they angrily reäffirm it, and, piling Ossa on Pelion, add injury to injury.

In their number for December, before we had had an opportunity of replying to their first attack, the gentlemen renewed the assault, under the name of a review of the Discourses of Dr. Adam Clarke. In their number for March they again rally to the charge, describing us as an '*entire denomination*' making war even against '*the Bible Society,*'—with our '*hands against every other*' denomination,—more solicitous, as they insinuate, to make disciples to '*Wesley*' than to '*Christ;*' little concerned '*how many benevolent enterprises are defeated,*' if our '*own party interests may thereby be promoted,*' and as pursuing a policy fitted, '*in their judgment,*' '*to jeopardize [jeopard] the interests of our common Christianity.*' And do the gentlemen think these light charges, or suppose that *we* ought to be silent under them? And are they sincere in declaring, at the same time, that they '*are conscious of no hostility*' to us? Then the tree is no longer known by its fruit. Or will they cover this inconsistent declaration by the broad avowal that they deny to us the title of a Christian denomination? We should, indeed, prefer this to a profession of such love as shows itself in nothing but hostile acts. As the gentlemen insinuate that we are more solicitous to make disciples to Wesley than to Christ,—we ask them whether they have ever read Mr. Wesley's sermon entitled '*A caution against bigotry;*' or that which immediately follows it, entitled, '*A catholic spirit?*' Do they know that the latter has also been published among our *tracts*? We beg them to read those sermons, and then to answer to the public, and, what is more serious, to their own consciences and to God, whether the admirers of such a man, admitting it were even true that our supreme object is to make disciples to him and not to Christ, can be such as they represent us. What denomination has been more ready to recognise the claims of our Christian and ministerial brethren of other denominations? What denomination has more freely opened its pulpits to those whom we know to differ from us on important points?—and to some who we know never reciprocate this courtesy? What denomination is more liberal in the kindly interchange of Christian communion at the Lord's table?—And are these the signs of our hand being against every other denomination, and of our pursuing a policy to the reckless, if not the wilful, jeoparding of our common Christianity? But it is alleged that we set up the banner of hostility against every institution based upon the principle of union, '*the Bible Society not excepted.*' This aspersion has been so often refuted, that we hoped its inventors and propagators had become ashamed of it. The *truth* is, there is not a Christian denomination in this land, or in any other

land, more heartily friendly to every truly Christian or benevolent enterprise, than the Methodist denomination. We have acknowledged, at the same time, that the plan of 'national' combinations has not appeared to us the most excellent way. We leave others to the full exercise of all that Christian liberty of judgment and of action which we desire for ourselves. To the principle of union, as it has been called, we have, in truth, not a particle of objection, so far as any denominations, or parts of denominations, choose to act on it. We have made war on none for so doing, unless the justification of our own acts, when it has been wrung from us, can be perversely so construed. We have repeatedly declared our candid and conscientious conviction that *we* can do more good by conducting our operations distinctly, and managing them in our own way. A large portion of the Protestant Episcopal Church, and we believe of some other churches, act on the same principle. Yet we are singled out for the cruel pelting of all this pitiless storm. Why is this? Is it brave? Is it just? Might it not as well be said that the Philadelphia Bible Society 'makes war' on the American Bible Society, because it chooses to act independently? If it would be calumny to assert this of that institution, what better is it to assert it of us?

In an article in the *Christian Spectator* for March, it is stated, that in the cruel persecutions against the pious in Switzerland, a leading measure of the tyrannical system of espionage there carried on, is to place all English travellers who receive the name of 'Methodists,' 'under the particular inspection of the police, in reference to all their connections and movements.' Do not the gentlemen of the *Christian Spectator* see that they themselves, and their auxiliaries, are pursuing a course little less odious toward 'Methodists' here? From the temper which they manifest, as regards us, could they need much more to convince them that they would be doing God service by raising a general crusade against us? and when once that phrenzy shall have seized the mind, who could answer for the consequences? The conductors of the *Christian Spectator*, and of several other journals in their alliance, for we are little molested from any other quarter, do already act toward us, in fact, on the principle of the most odious inquisitorial dictation. They insist, in effect, that we shall sacrifice our own judgment, and unite in *their modes* of operation, or else submit to be branded as enemies to benevolent enterprises and institutions, although we steadily affirm that we pursue our course, not from hostility to the objects, which we aim to promote as well as they, but because we believe that we can promote them better and more efficiently, with what means we possess, by proceeding in our own way; and although we every where, and constantly, labour to stir up all those with whom we have any influence, to show their faith by their works. Now whether our opinion be right or wrong, it is nevertheless our opinion; and we have seen nothing yet to alter it; and

we are as much entitled to act on it as our Congregational and Presbyterian brethren are to act on theirs. To affirm the contrary, or to continue to persecute us for this liberty of judgment or of action, is the very tyranny of the heart, and the spirit of the vilest popery. It is not one whit better in principle than the 'persecutions in Switzerland,' and wants little, we fear, but the power, to equal it in practice. We are happy to know, however, that the sentiments uttered by the *Christian Spectator* are not those of all Congregationalists, nor of all Presbyterians. There are gentlemen of those denominations, both of a better spirit, and of a better judgment. One of these, in a letter addressed to the treasurer of our Missionary Society in February last, says,

'REV. AND DEAR SIR,—Last year I proposed to a minister of your connexion, that I would be one of the ninety to give \$100 to the missionary cause under the care of your society. Soon after, I was deterred from doing it by your secession from the American Bible, Union, and Tract Societies.* I was sorry at that event, fearing it might weaken the good cause; but I am now satisfied it is all right, that it will bring a larger harvest, that it will employ more labourers in the whitened field, and that it will provoke us in the work of love to greater effort, and under God to greater results. I therefore hand over to my respected friend, the Rev. Mr. Gleason, \$50 of the sum, praying my God and your God that you may go on from strength to strength, continually beholding the path brighten. For seeing the good works of your society, I cannot but feel that God is with you of a truth, doing wonders. Praised be his name.'

Such feelings and sentiments as these, evince a genuine and noble Christian candour, and do more honour to Christianity than cart-loads of such tirades as are issued by the *Christian Spectator*.

But we must return to the object with which we set out, as mentioned at the head of this article. The gentlemen are entitled to the credit of at least aiming at high marks, and undertaking bold tasks. In their number for September last, their attack was on 'Methodism,' and its propagators and abettors generally. The task which they seem to have then prescribed to themselves was, to work up the public mind to regard us, aggregately, with the mingled emotions of contempt, aversion, and alarm. And having thus cut us up, as they probably think, in the general, that no chance of escape may be left, they proceed to consummate their work in detail. With a view to this, in this new order of attack, they commence with no less a person than, as they imagine, 'the oracle of Methodism,' *Dr. Adam Clarke*. The tone of illiberality in which they indulge toward this eminent man, is equalled only by the unbounded complacency with which they exalt themselves, and the contempt-

* In this our friend has inadvertently fallen into an error. The Bible Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church was formed independently, and was not a 'secession' from the American Bible Society; and the Methodist Tract Society was organized long before the American Tract Society had an existence.

uous arrogance toward 'Methodists,' which their journal bids fair to establish among its distinguishing characteristics. It is true, that after using their utmost exertions to force on Dr. Clarke and us a fool's coat, they add a declaration that their labours are 'without a single unkind feeling towards him, or those who adopt his sentiments.' Perhaps they would even wish us to believe that both in their matter and manner, in their tone and style, the law of kindness has been in their pen;—that 'love' which 'worketh no ill to his neighbour,'—and which says, 'Why dost thou set at nought thy brother?' If such, however, be the views which the gentlemen of the Christian Spectator entertain of the amiable fruits of this heavenly grace, we should humbly beg to be excused from the extension of such kind regards to us. If the gentlemen imagine that their injustice and hauteur are compensated by the condescension of an acknowledgment, which they felt compelled to make, of Dr. Clarke's piety, zeal, &c, we beg leave to assure them that their opinion of the effect of such condescension 'has been greatly overrated.' This carrying of coals to Newcastle, or graciously lighting a candle for us at midday, was not at all needed. To undertake, at this late day, to rob that venerable and honored man of his well and hard-earned reputation 'as a man of intellect and learning,' is not a less difficult task than it would have been to despoil him of a character for piety and zeal. The gentlemen do, indeed, undertake to assert in terms that Dr. Adam Clarke's knowledge, though various and extensive, 'is neither minute nor accurate on any subject.' That his principles of reasoning 'are remarkably unsettled.' That he has no great compacted system of thought 'either right or wrong.' That he is particularly deficient in 'the want of a clear and rectifying judgment;'—and that though his learning may throw a temporary splendor over the cause which he has espoused, yet 'the public will at last discover that it only "leads to bewilder, and dazzles to blind."'"—That is all;—it 'only' leads to this,—say the gentlemen,—nothing more, and nothing less. And these are 'only' the *concluding, finishing, impressive* touches which they give to their picture of Dr. Adam Clarke. Perhaps they wish us to consider this conclusion too as perfectly 'consistent' with their own previous profession of joy in the hope that works like Dr. Adam Clarke's '*will essentially conduce to reconcile multitudes to the truth.*' That is to say, the works of a man whose knowledge is not accurate on any subject, whose principles of reasoning are remarkably unsettled, who has no great compacted system of thought either right or wrong, and whose learning only leads to bewilder, and dazzles to blind!—If such a congeries of absurdities, and self-falsifying professions, can be picked out from all Dr. Clarke's voluminous writings, they would indeed deserve the contempt which the winding up of the gentlemen's article was obviously designed to pour upon the works of that excellent man:

It might in charity, perhaps, be supposed, that when the gentlemen say the public will at last discover that Dr. Clarke's learning only leads to bewilder, and dazzles to blind, they merely mean to be understood, however humiliating even this construction may be, that this is

the only effect of his learned labours; and not that he could himself design such an effect. Yet the gentlemen do not even leave us this poor consolation; but have the inconsistency, though, it would seem, 'without a single unkind feeling,' to insinuate that this 'truly pious and devoted servant of Christ' might, at the same time, have been actuated by a moral dishonesty of purpose, which the humblest 'truly pious' Christian female could not hesitate to spurn as most derogatory to her moral and Christian character. The passage to which we allude is that in which the gentlemen, speaking of Dr. Clarke's note on the omniscience of Deity, (p. 566,) say,—'It is a real denial of God's omniscience, though a very timid and awkward one; or else a very *artful denial for the purpose of bewildering feeble minds.*'—The gentlemen, in other parts of their article, seem to wish to avoid the appearance of so much uncharitableness as must be implied in not believing Dr. Clarke to be at least a pious man; but if they believe him capable, at the same time, of the satanic purpose implied in the alternative in the above sentence, their views of piety must be widely different from ours.

As the gentlemen, in reviewing, professedly, a recent volume of Dr. Clarke's '*Discourses*,' have thought proper, most adroitly, and for obvious purposes, to drag in his *Commentary*, and to employ a large portion of their article in decrying it, the intelligent reader cannot but be gratified with seeing here Dr. Clarke's own 'summary' of his mode of proceeding in executing that imperishable monument of learning and piety.

In this 'summary,' under the head '*CONCLUSION*,' at the close of the notes on the Old Testament, Dr. Clarke states that his education and habits from early youth, led him to read and study the Bible, not as a text book to confirm the articles of a *preconceived creed*, but as a *revelation from God* to man, which it is the duty of all the inhabitants of the earth deeply to study, and earnestly to endeavour to understand. In commencing his great work, he says,

'I sat down with a heart as free from bias and sectarian feeling as possible, and carefully read over, cautiously weighed, and literally translated, every word, *Hebrew* and *Chaldee*, in the Old Testament. And as I saw that it was possible, even while assisted by the best *translations* and best *lexicographers*, to mistake the import of a Hebrew term, and considering that the *cognate Asiatic languages* would be helps of great importance in such an inquiry, I collated every verse, where I was apprehensive of any difficulty, with the *Chaldee*, *Syriac*, *Arabic*, and *Persian*, and the *Æthiopic* in the *Polyglott Translation*, as far as the Sacred Writings are extant in these languages: and I did this with a constant reference to the *Various Readings* collected by *Houbigant*, *H. Michaelis*, *Kennicott*, and *De Rossi*, and to the best editions of the *Septuagint* and *Vulgate*, which are the earliest translations of the Hebrew Text which have reached our times.

Nor have I been satisfied with these collections of *Various Readings*; I have examined and collated several ancient *Hebrew MSS.* which preceding scholars had never seen, with many ancient *MSS.* of the *Vulgate* equally unknown to biblical critics.'

Such a course necessarily required much time, and great pains. He afterward proceeded similarly with the New Testament, literally translating every word of it;—

'Comparing the whole with all the *ancient Versions*, and the most important of the *modern*; collating all with the *Various Readings* collected by *Stephens, Courcel, Fell, Gherard of Maestricht, Bengell, Mill, Wetstein*, and *Griesbach*; actually examining many MSS., either cursorily or not at all examined by *them*; [and] illustrating the whole by quotations from ancient authors, *Rabbinical, Grecian, Roman, and Asiatic.*'

As a *previous* work, however, he had first carefully examined the best editions of the *Septuagint*, as the best, and, to a commentator, most indispensable help to a minute and accurate comprehension of the *idiom* and *phraseology* of the Greek Testament; 'having aimed at nothing throughout the whole, but the *glory of God* and the *good of men.*'

In regard to the '*modus operandi,*' or particular plan of proceeding in this work, Dr. Clarke says,

'I was led to attend, in the *first* instance, more to *words* than to *things*, in order to find their true ideal meaning; together with those different shades of *acceptation* to which they became subject, either in the circumstances of the speakers and those who were addressed, or in their application to matters which use, peculiarity of place and situation, and the lapse of time, had produced. It was my invariable plan to ascertain first, the *literal meaning* of every word and phrase; and where there was a *spiritual* meaning, or reference, to see how it was founded on the literal sense. He who assumes his spiritual meanings first, is never likely to interpret the words of God either to his own credit or to the profit of his readers: but in this track commentator has followed commentator, so that, in many cases, instead of a careful display of *God's words* and the *objects* of His providence and mercy, we have tissues of *strange doctrines, human creeds, and confessions of faith.* As I have said in another place, I speak not against *compilations* of this kind; but let them be founded on the words of God, first properly understood.

As I proceeded in my work, I met with other difficulties. I soon perceived an almost continual reference to the *Literature, Arts, and Sciences*, of the *Ancient World*, and of the *Asiatic* nations in particular; and was therefore obliged to make these my particular study, having found a thousand passages which I could neither illustrate nor explain, without some general knowledge at least of their *jurisprudence, astronomy, architecture, chemistry, chirurgery, medicine, metallurgy, pneumatics, &c.* with their *military tactics*, and the *arts and trades*, (as well *ornamental as necessary*) which are carried on in common life.

In the course of all this labour I have also paid particular attention to those *facts* mentioned in the Sacred Writings, which have been the subjects of *animadversion* or *ridicule* by *free thinkers* and *infidels* of all classes and in all times; and I hope I may say that no such passage is either designedly *passed by* or *superficially* considered; that the strongest objections are fairly produced and met;—that all such parts of these Divine writings are, in consequence, exhibited in their own lustre;—and, that the truth of the doctrine of our salvation has had as many *triumphs* as it has had *attacks* from the rudest and most formidable of its antagonists: and on all such disputed points I humbly hope that the Reader will never consult these volumes in vain. And if those grand doctrines which constitute what by some is called *orthodoxy*; that prove that God is loving to every man; that from His innate, infinite, and eternal goodness, He *wills* and has made *provision* for the salvation of *every human soul*, be found to be those which alone have stood the rigid test of all the above sifting and examination; it was not because these were sought for beyond all others, and the Scriptures *bent* in that way in order to favour them; but because these doctrines are essentially contained in, and established by, the ORACLES OF GOD.'

In the above-named immense and learned labours, Dr. Clarke most assiduously toiled for nearly *twenty-five years*, previously to sending his work to press; and *fifteen years* in bringing it through the press. And having thus intensely devoted to it about *forty years* of his life, the reader must perceive, as Dr. Clarke modestly remarks, that whether '*well or ill executed*,' it was not done 'in a *careless or precipitate manner*;' nor did he neglect any means within his reach, 'to make it in every respect, as far as possible, what the title page promises,—'A HELP TO A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THE SACRED WRITINGS.'

'Thus, [he concludes,] through the merciful help of God, my labour in this field terminates; a labour, which were it yet to commence, with the knowledge I now have of its difficulty, and my (in many respects) *inadequate means*, millions, even of the gold of Ophir, and all the honours that can come from man, could not induce me to undertake. Now that it is finished I regret not the labour; I have had the testimony of many learned, pious, and judicious friends relative to the execution and the usefulness of the Work. It has been admitted into the very *highest ranks* in society, and has lodged in the cottages of the poor. It has been the means of doing good to the *simple of heart*; and the *wise man* and the *scribe*, the *learned* and the *philosopher*, according to their own generous acknowledgments, have not consulted its pages in vain.

For all these, and all his other mercies to the Writer and Reader, may God the Fountain of all good, be eternally praised!

Eastcott, April 17, 1826.

ADAM CLARKE.'

In the 'advertisement' to his most able and evangelical sermon on 'salvation by faith,' Dr. Clarke says,

'The writer of this Discourse seeks truth of every description; especially, religious truth. For nearly half a century he has been in pursuit of it; and has neglected no means to attain it. He has watched with the ancients; has laboured with the moderns; and has searched the Scriptures; and earnestly prayed for the succours of the Spirit of Wisdom, that he might know the Truth, acknowledge it, and spread it abroad according to the power with which the Father of lights might endue him. He has acquainted himself with religious systems in general; he has examined with diligence, and he hopes he may say, with conscientious candour, creeds and catechisms, confessions of faith, and bodies of divinity in great numbers. All these have professed to refer him to the BIBLE; and from them all he turned to his Bible,—he has read it carefully, with intense study and fervent prayer. As far as it was possible he has divested himself of all the prejudices he might have received from preconceived opinions; and that he might not be warped by the common phraseology of religion, and theological expressions in general use, he has examined the *originals* of the Sacred Books; and, for his own use and satisfaction, translated every word of the Old and New Testaments; and conferred the originals with all the ancient and modern *versions*, which were within his reach; not neglecting the *commentaries* of the *ancient fathers*, nor those of learned and pious men in *modern times*. He could do no more,—and after all this labour, what has he found? Should he answer, *I have found the TRUTH*; every man, whose religious creed might differ from his, would pronounce him arrogant; while believing in the same moment that his own was the truth, though he had not taken the hundredth part of the trouble to form it, which the writer of this discourse has done to form that which he has published to the world. To save all such persons from the pain of harsh judgment, and to show others that this trumpet gives no indeterminate or uncertain sound; he says he has found the truth, as far as the

satisfaction of his own mind, and his personal salvation, are concerned. If there be still many branches of truth, relating to God and the eternal world, which he has not discovered; it is because they either cannot be known in this state of being; or his understanding cannot comprehend them.'

The frank and liberal spirit of these remarks is equalled only by the Christian loveliness and the evangelical soundness of the passage with which the amiable and reverend author concludes his advertisement.

'With a heart full of charity for all mankind, and with respect and reverence for the good and pious of every denomination, he dismisses the whole, with the fullest conviction that the doctrine of *justification by faith, through the atoning sacrifice of that Eternal Word which was manifest in the flesh*, is the only way by which a fallen soul can regain the favor, and be restored to the image of its Maker; and be at last brought, through the sanctification of the Divine Spirit, to the ineffable glory of God.'

It is of such a man, after such a life, of reading, and meditation, and study, and prayer, in the enjoyment of the very best means and opportunities from both men and books, that now, in the ripeness of his age, at threescore years and ten, the conductors of the *Christian Spectator* undertake to affirm that his knowledge 'is neither minute nor accurate *on any subject!*' Can it be worth while to argue with gentlemen who talk at this random rate? They must of course think that they have themselves a minute and accurate acquaintance with the whole field of knowledge over which Dr. Clarke's herculean toils have carried him, and that not 'Methodists' only, but the literary and reading public generally, have hitherto been merely bewildered and blinded by the delusive glare of Dr. Clarke's literary splendor.—Thus did the woman who conceived that she could demonstrate that the earth does not turn on its axis, because, if it did, the water would run out of the well, enjoy, in her own imagination, a splendid triumph over the most renowned philosophers and astronomers; never dreaming, it would seem, that the want of accuracy of knowledge, after all, might possibly be in herself.

But the gentlemen are not content with efforts to degrade Dr. Clarke as to accuracy of knowledge, and purity of motive. They accuse him also of 'vulgarity of expression,' too nearly resembling 'the coarse language of the profane.' In proof of this they have produced *one word*, from all his works, and that word, in Dr. Clarke's use and application of it, we venture to affirm far less obnoxious to the criticism by which they endeavour to pervert it, than several words which may be selected from *the Bible*. The term 'luck,' (the word in question,) was probably derived from the German *gluck*, and that from *gelingen*, 'to succeed.' (*Crabbe*.) In this sense Dr. Clarke obviously used it, as signifying *success*; and in this sense there is certainly nothing in it, even in its application to the success of Christ's kingdom, either of vulgarity or profanity. And though, considering the general modern acceptation of the term, we shall not contend that a better word might not perhaps have been chosen, yet candid critics, we should imagine, would have attributed Dr. Clarke's use of it to something of that 'antique air' which the gentlemen impute to him, or to his love of the radical primary sense of words, rather than to vulgarity or profanity, or to his desire of fabricating a cover for denying

'the decrees of God,'—which we assure them neither Dr. Clarke nor we ever have denied, or have any wish to deny.

The gentlemen, however, seem to need to be informed that in representing Dr. Clarke as the 'oracle' of Methodism, they only manifest their usual want of acquaintance with the history and state of this troublesome 'sect,' which has of late attracted so much of their attention. We are far from thinking, at the same time, 'that nothing can be more injurious to [our] cause' than that this distinguished man should be so considered. We believe we could name some 'gentlemen' in this country whom it would be infinitely more injurious to us 'to hold out to the public' as our oracles. We beg leave to inform them, however, that the true and only 'oracle' of Methodism is *the Bible*, and that we call no man, living or dead, Master, except in so far as we believe that he speaks 'as the oracles of God.' This is one of our fundamental articles of faith, and in our Compendium of Doctrines and Discipline, is thus expressed :

'The Holy Scriptures contain all things necessary to salvation: so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an article of faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation.'—p. 8.

We do indeed esteem Dr. Clarke very highly in love and reverence for his works' sake; and not a particle the less for the flippant tone which the gentlemen of the *Christian Spectator* hold toward him. Their love and favor for him we did not expect. He shows too little mercy to *their* 'decrees,' and those of Mr. Calvin; though the 'decrees of God,' as he conceives them to be revealed in the Bible, Dr. Clarke holds and defends to the utmost extent of his ability, as we also do.

Among uninspired men we had supposed that John Wesley had usually been regarded by our opponents as 'the oracle of Methodism,' and after him, perhaps, John Fletcher. Yet it might be possible to pick out a sentence, or a word, even from their writings, which we should not choose to consider as *oracular*. As commentators, moreover, we have not only Wesley, and Clarke, but also the very valuable and excellent works of Coke, and Benson. Indeed, after all the clamor against us of want of learning, and even of opposition to it, (though no charge could possibly be more false,) few denominations, if any, have produced more able commentators on the sacred books, or have supported them by more ready and extensive patronage. And although these commentators will probably seldom or never be found to differ materially on important doctrines, and on essential ones certainly never, yet, on points of criticism, they afford a deep and interesting variety of thought and research, with abundant matter of edification and profit both for the learned and the unlearned.

It is true the *Christian Spectator*, in speaking of Dr. Clarke's Commentary, treats us, in its usual manner when 'Methodists' are concerned, with the following sneering language:—

'Precisely what proportion of his brethren in this country, whether bishops, priests, or laity, will be able to follow him in his quotations from the Saxon, Latin, Greek, Hebrew, Samaritan, Arabic, and Ethiopic languages, with which he has variegated his pages, we cannot say.'—p. 553.

Nor can we say *precisely* what proportion of our Congregational brethren, or even of our Reviewers, are able to do it. From some remarks of their own in another article, we are apprehensive that it is a very great mistake to suppose that any very remarkable depth or breadth even of *Hebrew* literature exists in that quarter,—to say nothing of Saxon, Arabic, and Ethiopic. For, if it be true, as the gentlemen themselves, in reviewing another work, affirm, 'that to buy a *Hebrew Grammar, Lexicon, or Bible, at the cheapest rate*, application should be made to one who has been a few years from a theological school,'—then we do not hesitate to say that the knowledge of *Hebrew* possessed by those thus sent forth from such theological schools, must be extremely superficial. Were it otherwise,—were they capable of using a *Hebrew Bible*, even with the help of a *Lexicon and Grammar*, it is impossible that they could thus value it 'at the cheapest rate.' And if they have so little knowledge of the *Hebrew*, and so little taste even for its cultivation, what can be expected from them in Arabic, and Ethiopic! We do not doubt, indeed, that to such 'the stiff and stately *Hebrew*, [and perhaps even] the nimble *Greek*, [as well as] the sprawling *Arabic*, and almost all other conceivable characters, are found parading the pages [of Dr. Adam Clarke's works] in dumb show.' But we can nevertheless assure the gentlemen that there is a respectable number of Methodist ministers who hold at least their *Hebrew Bibles*, and *Lexicons*, in a very different estimation.

The remarks of the *Christian Spectator*, in regard to those who are sent out from some theological schools in this country, are so very much in unison with some of Mr. Wesley's on the false opinion usually entertained in relation to what has been commonly called the learned world, that we beg leave here to quote them. He was answering the objections then urged by some, in England, against the Preachers in connexion with him; and among others that they were 'unlearned.'

'The ground of this offence [he says,] is partly true. Some of those who now preach are unlearned. They neither understand the ancient languages, nor any of the branches of philosophy. And yet this objection might have been spared, by many of those who have frequently made it; because they are unlearned too, (though accounted otherwise.) They have not themselves the very thing they require in others.

Men in general are under a great mistake with regard to what is called "the Learned World." They do not know, they cannot easily imagine, how little learning there is among them.

How few men of learning, so called, understand *Hebrew*! Even so far as to read a plain chapter in *Genesis*! Nay, how few understand *Greek*! Make an easy experiment. Desire that grave man who is urging this objection, only to tell you the English of the first paragraph that occurs in one of Plato's Dialogues! I am afraid we may go farther still. How few understand *Latin*! Give one of them an Epistle of Tully, and see how readily he will explain it without his Dictionary. If he can hobble through that, 'tis odds but a Georgick in Virgil, or a Satire of Persius, sets him fast.

And with regard to the Arts and Sciences: how few understand so much as the general principles of Logic!—Can one in ten of them [the clergy of that day, or of the Masters of Arts in either University,] demonstrate a Problem or Theorem in Euclid's Elements? Or define the common terms used in Metaphysics? Or intelligibly explain the first principles of it? Why then will they pretend to that learning, which they are conscious to themselves they have not? Nay, and censure others who have it not, and do not pretend to it? Where are Sincerity and Candor fled?

It will easily be observed, that I do not depreciate Learning of any kind. The knowledge of the Languages is a valuable talent; so is the knowledge of the Arts and Sciences. Both the one and the other may be employed to the glory of God, and the good of men. But yet I ask, Where hath God declared in his word, that he cannot, or will not make use of men that have it not? Has Moses, or any of the Prophets affirmed this? Or our Lord? Or any of his Apostles? You are sensible all these are against you.'—*Farther Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion.*

In regard to the views of the Methodist denomination on the subject of education and learning, and their actual state among us, the *Christian Spectator* has indulged itself in a strain which, on the part of persons possessing even a moderate share of information, and feeling in any measure the responsibilities of Christian writers, is to us perfectly unaccountable, and

indeed utterly incomprehensible. In truth, their statements and insinuations are such, that, if intended as an experiment on the utmost capacity of the public mind for the reception of false impressions, they could not possibly be more completely adapted to the purpose. A few quotations from their article will illustrate these remarks, and show also the systematic and studied continuance of the same tone and spirit toward us, on the part of the conductors of that work, as were exhibited in their review of the economy of Methodism, noticed in our last number. In the outset of their article they denominate us 'a sect distinguished for fervid declamation against human learning.' They 'regret that some one [some one] could not be found [among all our 'bishops, priests, and laity,'] to correct so obvious a slip of the pen, as occurs in a translation of a short Hebrew phrase where Dr. Clarke twice writes *day* for *night*, as well as to present his Hebrew quotations to the American public without the blunder of making them read [as in one instance referred to] from the lower line to the one above.' We take leave here to inform the gentlemen that the work to which they allude was not issued from the Methodist press; and this they must have seen from the imprint. Their insinuation, at the same time, however applied, is not the less illiberal. In their review of Dwight's *Travels in Germany*, containing many times more errors, of the press probably, as well as improprieties and slovenliness of style, they could, nevertheless, charitably impute such things to want of care and attention, rather than to want of ability or learning, which we are very willing as charitably to believe. Yet for a work which they leave their readers to believe was issued from the *Methodist press*, though not so, no such allowance it seems could be made. We can assure the gentlemen, however, that their own work contains at least as many errors as they have pointed out in the edition of Dr. Clarke's *Discourses*, [which, by the way, to do justice to the young tradesmen who published them, are, on the whole, very creditably printed,] and errors too of such a nature that school boys ought to have been able to correct them. We should think it a very small business at the same time to impute them to incapacity in the conductors of the *Christian Spectator*, or among its friends, for 'some one' surely 'could' be found among them who *does* know how to spell common words better than to write and print of sermons, that they were 'thickly studied with figures denoting numerical divisions,' p. 556;—'resistence,' p. 660;—'a clergymen,' 662:—'the advantages—*is* obvious.' *Ib.* We do not doubt either that some one could be found among them able to 'calculate with greater accuracy' than to represent a ship as sailing from Salem, Mass., to Calcutta in Bengal in 'two months,' viz. from February 19 to June 18, (p. 17, vol. ii;) a slip of the pen or of the printer, equal to that of 'day' for 'night.'*

Slips such as the above, which have met our eye in a hasty glance over a few of the pages of the *Christian Spectator* for other purposes, we shall leave to those who have a taste for magnifying such matters. Proceeding with that pertness of style with which alone it would seem the gentlemen can 'stoop to notice' Methodists, they add,—'Perhaps the very vehemence with which they ["our Methodist friends"] had decried "human know-

* In the 2d vol., recently published, of Dr. Clarke's *Discourses*, at p. 254, near the bottom, instead of 'and day clearly demonstrates knowledge, (or science,) unto day,'—it ought to read,—and night clearly demonstrates knowledge, (or science,) unto night. That the error was a 'slip of the pen,' or perhaps of the typographer, must be obvious even to the mere English reader, if he will look at the second sentence afterward, where the sentiment is correctly repeated in reference to 'the night.' The same error exists in the London copy; but whether Dr. Clarke wrote it as it is printed, does not appear, nor is it of any consequence. The error in the American edition, pp. 253-5, of making the Hebrew quotations read from the lower line to the one above, does not exist in the English edition. This is certainly a blunder. But whether it resulted from want of Hebrew knowledge in the American corrector of the press, or from his nodding at the time, we cannot tell. We know not who the corrector was.

ledge," only prepared them to hail, with greater rapture, so powerful an auxiliary, [Dr. A. Clarke,] and even to overrate his prowess, when they saw him coming to their aid, loaded with the spoils of so many unknown languages and nations.'—'To *decry learning*,' they represent as 'one *broad feature*' in our character, which Dr. A. Clarke's work they think 'will tend powerfully to change:'—they then continue thus,—

'Should the change in this respect become complete in all our existing denominations, it would not be surprising, if a new sect should arise to promote ignorance as its distinctive object; and thus allure to its standard, the miserable remnant of those who should still believe that a preacher is the more likely to be aided with a direct inspiration from heaven, just in proportion as he is incapacitated to read or understand the revelation which God has given in his word. Lest any one should think this conjecture extravagant, we beg leave to add, that we once knew of a preacher in a distant part of our country, who openly boasted in a public assembly, as he requested a woman to find and read his text, that he had never been able to read himself, but had received his gift of preaching from a higher source. This man found not a few to admire and caress him. We ought in justice, however, to say, that he was not a Methodist.'

This passage, taken in connexion with their preceding remarks, was so obviously intended for the 'sect' still so perseveringly spoken against, that the gentlemen, feeling the inevitableness of the application, if not expressly disclaimed, were compelled in conscience to add, that the individual last alluded to was not a Methodist. We wish this internal monitor had been as operative on some other occasions. This specific exception, however, only leaves the general application so much the stronger.

The gentlemen seem to be under an impression that Dr. Adam Clarke is the first, if not the only, literary star that has appeared in the horizon of Methodism, or that ever attained any eminent altitude; and that the 'temporary splendor' which the brightness of his rising has thrown 'over the cause which he has espoused,' though, in their judgment, a false, delusive splendor, has nevertheless produced, or is producing, a *revolution* in the views of Methodists with regard to the utility of learning. And 'however unprofitable in itself,' as they modestly insinuate Dr. Clarke's learned Commentary to be, (though their own work 'it is hoped' will be deemed worthy of being adopted as a 'national' one,) yet the 'indirect' bearing of it they think will be propitious; because it will make the 'sect' of which they consider him the 'head,' 'cease to decry learning;' and they 'hope' it will even lead this said 'sect' to 'become its zealous promoters, and to do much to raise the standard of knowledge among the more uninformed in this country and in Great Britain.'

That a denomination recognising and claiming as their founders, under God, men who were themselves accomplished scholars, and ardent lovers and promoters of learning, should 'vehemently' decry learning, and make the promotion of ignorance its 'distinctive object,' would be an 'anomaly' indeed,—a paradox too great for intelligent readers, or, if we may adopt the *gentlemanly* language of the Christian Spectator, even for 'their ignorant brethren.' The Rev. John Wesley, after having received the necessary preparatory education at the Charter House, was removed, at the age of seventeen, to Christ Church College, Oxford, and was there distinguished for his literary and scientific attainments. After having resided in that ancient and eminent seat of learning about six years, and passed through the usual degrees, before he was twenty-three years of age he was elected Fellow of Lincoln, and shortly afterward appointed Greek Lecturer and Moderator of the classes. But instead of then relaxing in his studies, though enjoying the honors of the University, he formed for himself a scheme of which the following is an outline, and from which he resolved not to vary for some years at least:—

'Mondays and Tuesdays were allotted for the classics; Wednesdays to logic and ethics; Thursdays to Hebrew and Arabic; Fridays to metaphysics and natural philosophy; Saturdays to oratory and poetry, but chiefly to composition in those arts; and the Sabbath to divinity. It appears by his diary, also, that he gave great attention to mathematics.'—*Southey's Life of Wesley*, vol. i, p. 42.

In addition to the above branches of study, he made himself acquainted also with the French and German languages.

It is, in fact, a very remarkable circumstance, and one seldom paralleled, that the whole Wesley family, parents and children, male and female, were as singularly distinguished for talents, and love of letters, as for deep and rational devotion. It was the opinion of Mr. Southey, indeed, that 'talents of no ordinary kind, as well as a devotional temper, were hereditary in this remarkable family.' We quote Mr. Southey the rather, because we presume his authority will be listened to by the gentlemen, when they would smile, perhaps, at our quoting a *Methodist* biographer. Samuel Wesley, the oldest brother, distinguished himself first at Westminster, and afterward at Christ Church College, Oxford. Mr. Charles Wesley, also, the associate and fellow labourer with his brother John in establishing the Methodist societies, first passed through his preparatory course at St. Peter's College, Westminster, and afterward completed his studies at Christ Church, Oxford, where he took his degrees in the usual course.

The truth is, that Methodism, in its distinctive origin, had its first organization in the very lap and bosom of literature and science. There was its earliest 'local habitation;' and there it received its distinctive name. The first Methodists were *all* collegians. The first Methodist Society consisted wholly of the members of a University, and one too of which 'Yale' might consider it no dishonor to be an humble appendage.

Since the days of the apostles, we doubt whether there have ever lived two holier or more thoroughly and uniformly devoted and zealous ministers of Christ, than *John Fletcher*, and *Thomas Walsh*,—the former a clergyman of the Church of England, and the great and steady friend and coadjutor of Mr. Wesley;—and the latter one of the most eminent among his early lay preachers. In the *Life of Fletcher*, by Benson, it is stated that

'He passed the early part of his life at Nyon, [in Switzerland,] where he soon discovered an elevated turn of mind, accompanied with an unusual degree of vivacity. After having made a good proficiency in learning, he was removed, with his two brothers, to Geneva, where he was distinguished equally by his superior abilities, and his uncommon application. The two first prizes, for which he stood a candidate, he carried away from a number of competitors, several of whom were nearly related to the professors: and on these occasions he was complimented by his superiors in a very flattering manner. During his residence at Geneva, he allowed himself but little time, either for recreation, refreshment, or rest. After confining himself closely to his studies all the day, he would frequently consume the greater part of the night in noting down whatever had occurred, in the course of his reading, worthy of observation. Here he acquired that true classical taste, which was so frequently and justly admired by his intimate friends, and which all his studied plainness could never conceal. Here also he laid the foundation of that extensive and accurate knowledge, for which he was afterward distinguished, both in Philosophical and Theological researches. After quitting Geneva, he was sent by his father to Letzbourg, a small town in the Swiss Cantons, where he not only acquired the German language, but diligently prosecuted his other studies, to which he ever discovered a passionate attachment. On his return from this place he continued some time at home, studying the Hebrew language, and perfecting his acquaintance with mathematical learning.'—pp. 17, 18.

After he came to England, and perfected himself in the English language, he was first a tutor in the family of Mr. Hill, and subsequently superintended Lady Huntingdon's college at Trevecca, from which he withdrew when that lady required all persons in the college to disavow the doctrines of Mr. Wesley's minutes, or leave the place.

Thomas Walsh, a native of Ireland, was, it is true, 'the son of a carpenter.' Yet our reviewers, we trust, will not despise his memory for this. In the diligent study of the Scriptures he was almost unparalleled; and preached in Irish, as well as in English. This gave him a great advantage among his countrymen.

'Even the poor Catholics listened willingly, when they were addressed in their mother tongue: his hearers frequently shed silent tears, and frequently sobbed aloud, and cried for mercy; and in country towns the peasantry, who, going there upon market day, had stopped to hear the preacher, from mere wonder and curiosity, were oftentimes melted into tears, and declared that they could follow him all over the world.—In conversation, too, and upon all the occasions which occurred in daily life, at inns, and upon the highway, and in the streets, this

remarkable man omitted no opportunity of giving religious exhortation to those who needed it : — [Even] 'the beggars, to whom he frequently addressed himself in the streets, would fall on their knees, and beat their breasts, weeping, and crying for mercy.'*

Mr. Walsh possessed an intellect 'of no common order;' and such was his absolute absorption in religious things, that

'It is said that he walked through the streets of London with as little attention to all things around him, as if he had been in a wilderness, unobservant of whatever would have attracted the sight of others, and as indifferent to all sounds of excitement, uproar, and exultation, as to the passing wind. He showed the same insensibility to the influence of fine scenery and sunshine: the only natural object, of which he spoke with feeling, was the starry firmament,—for there he beheld infinity.'

But with all this extraordinary heavenly mindedness, which exhibited itself if possible still more astonishingly in his preaching, did this devoted and zealous man 'decry learning?' Let the gentlemen read even Mr. Southey's account of Thomas Walsh's love of letters, and his 'intemperance in study.' Mr. Wesley, whom we hope even his enemies will allow to have had some claim to at least a literary character, declared that Mr. Walsh, though 'a young man,'† was 'such a master of Biblical knowledge' as he had never seen before, and never expected to see again. That he was, in fact, 'so thoroughly acquainted with the Bible, that if questioned concerning any Hebrew word in the Old, or any Greek word in the New Testament, he would tell, after a little pause, not only how often the one or the other occurred in the Bible, but also what it meant in every place.' '*Hebrew*,' in short, says Mr. Southey, 'was his favorite study.'

"O truly laudable and worthy study!" he exclaims concerning it: "O industry above all praise! whereby a man is enabled to converse with God, with holy angels, with patriarchs, and with prophets, and clearly to unfold to men the mind of God from the language of God!" And he was persuaded that he had not attained the full and familiar knowledge of it, which he believed that he possessed, without special assistance from Heaven. At this study he frequently sat up late; and his general time of rising was at four. When he was entreated to allow himself more sleep, by one who saw that he was wasting away to death, his reply was, "Should a man rob God?"

In this place, Mr. Southey, inadvertently we presume, not only destroys the appositeness and force of Mr. Walsh's reply, but makes him speak nonsense. The true occasion of the reply was this;—a lady, compassionating Mr. Walsh's wasting, dying condition, said to him once,

"Sure Mr. Walsh, you may at least lie longer in bed on *Sunday* morning, when the preaching is not so early." To which he replied with his usual zeal and plainness, "Should a man rob God?" He was commonly up earliest on the Lord's day, for which he had the highest veneration.—*Morgan's Life of Walsh.*

In this reference, the reply has a pungent propriety which it would be well for Christian professors, and ministers especially, duly to consider.

In the year 1776, Dr. Coke first became united with Mr. Wesley, and of all his fellow labourers was soon regarded as one of the most efficient. No other clergyman of the Church of England, who adopted the views of Mr. Wesley and coöperated with him, entered so entirely into the affairs of the societies. He gave wholly to them himself, his fortune, (which was con-

* The Irish language is said to be remarkable for its expressiveness and pathos; and hence the saying in Ireland,—“When you plead for your life, plead in Irish.” The following anecdote, related in *Morgan's Life of Thomas Walsh*, is a striking illustration.

‘In a journey once between Cork and Bandon, he fell into conversation with a man who rode with him, till, as was his constant manner, he began to apply something to his heart, concerning the worth of his soul, and the way of salvation. But he savouring not the things of God, became grievously offended. Nay, his prejudice ran so high, that he declared, although he was shot for it he would have satisfaction: adding with an oath, “Thou shalt never deceive another, for I am resolved to be the death of thee just now.”

I was quiet in my mind, [says Mr. Walsh,] being persuaded that the God of Daniel was still the same. I did not feel the least anger, or rising of revenge towards him; and still reproved him whenever he swore. In the midst of his rage I reproved him in *Irish*. He was instantly amazed; and replied, “Why did you not speak so to me, in the beginning?” The lion became a lamb, and I then let him know, still speaking in *Irish*, what Christ had done for sinners. He departed with a broken heart.”

† He died in his 28th year.

siderable,) his life,—every minute that could be employed in active exertions. He occupied a place in the connection second only to that of the Messrs. Wesley themselves, and was soon regarded, indeed, as Mr. Wesley's more immediate representative. Like him, he travelled as a general inspector, wherever his presence was thought needful, and in Ireland, particularly, visited the societies alternately with Mr. Wesley, so as to secure an annual visitation. Now this early Methodist leader too, was a polished scholar, and richly endowed with University lore. He had received an elementary education at the college school of Brecon, was subsequently entered a gentleman commoner at Jesus College, Oxford, and took his degree of Doctor of Laws in 1776, being then in the 28th year of his age.

The late *Rev. Joseph Benson*, author of a most valuable Commentary on the Bible, in five vols. quarto, *Life of Fletcher, Sermons, &c.* was also one of the most influential of the early Methodist ministers, and a man of deep and various learning. His education, originally, was with a view to the ministry in the established Church of England. With the Latin and Greek classics he was familiar, and was well acquainted also with Hebrew. The Greek Testament he is said to have perused so frequently and carefully, that he could almost repeat it verbatim. In 1766 he was appointed by Mr. Wesley classical master of the school at Kingswood. In 1770 he received from Lady Huntingdon the appointment of Head Master of her College at Trevecca; from which Institution he was subsequently removed on the same ground as before mentioned in the case of Mr. Fletcher, but with a clear and full testimonial as to his capacity and diligence, from her Ladyship herself. In 1769 he was entered in the University of Oxford, kept his terms regularly in St. Edmund Hall, and diligently cultivated the various branches of a University education. It was his purpose to continue at Oxford till graduated in the usual course. But in consequence of having occasionally exhorted and prayed with some people, when in the country, (as he still spent a part of his time at the Kingswood school and a part at the College at Trevecca,) the Vice Principal of Edmund Hall, regarding this as a violation of the statutes of the University, and perhaps as being religious overmuch, informed him peremptorily that he never would sign his testimonials for orders. In this Mr. Benson considered himself very harshly treated, as he had not been aware that his course would be regarded in so offensive a light, had never been admonished to desist, was charged with no immoral or wilfully disorderly act, and had not the liberty granted him of even altering his course. His true crime, and that no small or pardonable one in some people's eyes then, as well as now, doubtless was,—he was a 'Methodist.' In this state of things, perceiving that his primary object in entering the University would be defeated, after having spent two years there he left it without the usual honors, though far better entitled to them, as to his literary qualifications, than multitudes on whom, either there or here, such honors have been conferred. But though he left the University, he never left his love of learning, through the residue of an eminently active and useful life of more than threescore years and ten; much less did he ever 'decry' learning. That eminently chaste and eloquent preacher, himself an accomplished scholar, the *Rev. Jabez Bunting, A.M.*, bears witness, from personal knowledge, that Mr. Benson, to the latest stage of his life, carried the intensity of his application to study, if there was any fault in him in this respect, even to an extreme. 'He knew not [says Mr. Bunting,] how to spare himself, and it was no uncommon thing for him, even late in life, to occupy his study, with but few and inconsiderable intervals from literary and pious toil, from four o'clock in the morning, until ten or eleven at night.'*

The first Bishop of the American Methodists was the *Rev. Dr. Coke*, of

* *Memoirs of the Rev. Joseph Benson*; by the *Rev. J. M'Donald*.

whom a brief sketch has already been given. Contemporary and associated with him, in the same office, was the *Rev. Francis Asbury*. This apostolic man did, indeed, like many others of the most eminent men, rise from a very humble origin. Literally, he wore 'no mitre,'—'no robes of greatness;' and though the dignitaries of some other Churches might 'smile at his lack of external splendor, and despise him for the "bend sinister" [in their estimation, but not we hope in that of Congregationalists and Presbyterians,] in his Episcopal escutcheon,' yet he did indeed wield 'an actual and effective power' in the hearts and affections of hundreds of thousands, 'which many a right reverend prelate, glorying in the [fancied] uninterrupted succession of his official genealogy, might be strongly tempted to envy.' But Francis Asbury never 'decried learning;' much less was it his 'distinctive object' to 'promote ignorance.' In the midst of labours and travels almost unparalleled, for more than half a century, he still redeemed time both to cultivate his own mind, and to aid in the most benevolent plans for the improvement of others. He was not only remarkably energetic, tasteful, and correct, in the use of his own native tongue, (the English,) but had made himself also respectably acquainted with his *Hebrew Bible*, which, pressing as his wants sometimes were, we assure the gentlemen of the *Christian Spectator*, he would hardly have been willing to sell at all, (and certainly not, if he could not have procured another,) much less 'at the cheapest rate.'

But enough. Of the living we will not speak; and of Dr. Clarke we certainly need not speak. Yet, after all, perhaps the gentlemen exclaim, What does all this argue? What if the Wesleys, and Fletchers, and Walshes, and Cokes, and Bensons, and Asburys, and Clarkes, and a host of others, have been lovers of letters, and friends of learning? What if one of Mr. Wesley's most prominent and early acts was the establishment of a classical school at Kingswood, which flourishes still, and if the preachers in connexion with him in England have since, by great exertions, established another of the same character, but more extensive, at Woodhouse Grove;—what if one of the very first acts of the Methodist bishops and conference in America, immediately after the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and in the midst of their poverty and privations, was the establishment of a college on an extensive scale, at Abingdon, in Maryland;—what if near \$50,000, in that infancy of Methodism here, were begged through the continent for that institution; and if, after it was burnt down some ten years subsequently, another effort was still made to establish another college in Baltimore, which, to the dismay of its friends, was shortly afterward also burnt;—what if Bishop Asbury, the very soul of the body, it would seem, in the estimation of some gentlemen, had it specially at heart to see a school under the special patronage of Methodists, established *in every district*,—all which are *facts*;—yet what does all this prove?—Does it prove that the Methodists have not been a 'sect' hostile to learning; and that it has not been their 'distinctive object' to 'promote ignorance?' We shall not answer the question. And if either ignorance or malice answer it against us, we have no hope that any thing that we can say will mend either the heart of the one, or the head of the other. Before Methodists, however, can 'decry learning,' they must *learn* to decry their own founders, and the most eminent, devoted, holy, zealous, indefatigable, and successful men, who have ever espoused and adorned their cause; and they must, moreover, exhibit the anomaly of a people imbued with a spirit and with principles diametrically opposite to those of their most distinguished guides and leaders. We doubt whether any considerable number even of individuals among Methodists have ever done this; much less the 'sect.' And if any have, the unworthy acts of such individuals ought no more to be charged to the denomination than other unworthy acts of other unworthy individuals, in our own denomination or

in others. Among the constant charges to every Methodist preacher are,—‘Be diligent.—Never be unemployed: never be triflingly employed.—Never trifle away time.’—To these are added, ‘Search the Scriptures,’—constantly,—some part of every day: regularly,—all the Bible in order: carefully,—with notes: seriously,—with prayer: fruitfully,—immediately practising: meditating,—at set times: hearing,—at every opportunity.’—‘To instruct the people, not only publicly, but ‘from house to house.’ In order to this, they are assured that they will need to exercise all the sense and grace they have, and ‘all the knowledge’ they can ‘procure,’ or the grace they can ‘attain.’ And thus, thoroughly to furnish themselves, and to be able to instruct others, as workmen that need not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth, they are advised, and exhorted, to redeem every fragment of time,—‘As often as possible to rise at four;—from four to five in the morning, and from five to six in the evening, to meditate, pray, and read the Scriptures, with notes;—to read the most useful books, and that regularly and constantly,—steadily to spend all the morning in this employment, or at least five hours in the four and twenty, in addition to their other duties. If any plead that they have not a taste for this, they are advised to contract a taste for it, by practice, or to quit the ministry. If any plead that they have not books,—they are enjoined to be ‘diligent to spread the books,’ and then they will find them wherever they go.

By the way, it will be recollected that this very rule about spreading the ‘books,’ and taking care ‘that every society be duly supplied with books,’ was brought against us on a former occasion as a matter of taunting and reproach. ‘The immense diffusion of ‘books’ all over this continent, by the ‘Methodist book concern,’ greatly distressed the gentlemen. They thought it absolutely alarming. And now, forsooth, our ‘distinctive object,’ it would seem, has been ‘to promote ignorance!’—How is this?—We believe we understand the matter, and so do ‘Methodists.’—‘Look at the book list!’—Bibles and Testaments, (Hebrew, Greek, Spanish, French, and English,) Hymnbooks, Commentaries, (Wesley’s, Coke’s, Benson’s, and Clarke’s,) Theological Institutes, (Watson’s,) Dictionaries of the Bible and of Theology, (by Martindale, Wood, Buck,) Sermons, (by Wesley, Benson, Clarke, Coke, Drew, &c,) Ecclesiastical History, Philosophy, Works of Fletcher, Apology for the Bible, (Watson’s, Bishop of Llandaff,) Sturm’s Reflections, Watts on the Mind, Manners of the Ancient Israelites, (from the French of Abbe Fleury, by Dr. Clarke,) Biographies of Wesley, Fletcher, Coke, Benson, Martyn, &c, &c; Dictionaries and Lexicons, (English, Latin, Greek, and Hebrew;) Horne’s Introduction to the Critical Study and Knowledge of the Holy Scriptures, with numerous smaller works, devotional, historical, and literary. What a catalogue of ‘ignorance’ to be so industriously spread over this whole continent, and not a *Hopkinsian* work in the whole ‘list!’

We have already noticed the extensive and repeated efforts of the first American Methodist bishops and preachers, with the aid of the societies, to establish a college for general and liberal learning, so early as 1785,—before the ‘dazzling’ lustre of Dr. Clarke’s literary ‘splendor’ had as yet beamed across the Atlantic. And we will now submit an official document which will show the anxious desire which early existed among us, not only to promote a ‘refined education’ among those possessing leisure and means for acquiring it, but also to contribute our share toward the education of the whole mass of our rising population,—rich and poor,—male and female. It was drawn up by Bishop Asbury, and published in the Minutes of the Conferences for 1791. The following is an extract.

‘To the Brethren in the united societies of the Methodist Episcopal Church in America.

DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD,—I rejoice to see so many thousands of the present generation, happy subjects of knowledge and grace. A real concern for the rising offspring and

the children yet unborn, has been very weighty on my mind for many years. We have been at no small expense to provide a house for refined education, to serve those whose wealth and desires lead them to improve the minds of their children. This will not extend to all, neither will it meet the ideas and wishes of those who have personal and located interests. What I now recommend, as your duty and privilege, is to give the key of knowledge in a general way, to your children, and those of the poor in the vicinity of your small towns and villages. It is submitted to your serious consideration, providence, and charity, whether a plan of Christian education may not be brought into execution. In every large society, where the members are able and willing, to build a school house for your sons, and to appropriate land—to employ a single, skilful pious young man of the society; fix his salary according to that of a travelling preacher; or if a married man, the same with that of a married preacher. The worship of God in the school house, should be reading the word of the Lord, singing and prayer, every morning and evening. Playing strictly prohibited.—To enjoin manly exercise, working in the garden or field, walking, reading, or speaking in public, or bathing. To admit the children whose parents are not in our society, by paying and submission to the rules—to take as many poor of our own, and others as you can. To build a separate school [house] for your daughters, and put these under a gracious woman of abilities, to learn to read, write, sew, knit, mark, and make their own clothing—to have their religious exercises and instructions the same as your sons—to expel the false, obstinately wicked, and incorrigible of either sex. The Elder can spend a day in the school once in two weeks to see how both parts of education are attended to. It might be well to elect and appoint three men, wise, good, and willing, as trustees or stewards, to serve a year; in order to manage the temporalities, visit at set times, admit or expel, after consulting the Elder: and three very discreet, godly women, for the daughters, who shall do the same.

The school [edifice] may be erected, and finished, clear of debt or rent, for one hundred pounds. Some pious people will probably, at their death, leave legacies; and annual subscriptions should be opened through the society and for any others that will assist. A charity sermon once a year, and public collections may be necessary; perhaps sixty or seventy pounds will be sufficient for the annual expense. The sisters must collect amongst their own sex, and also see how the mistress performs her duty.—We have but small hopes of coming properly at the lambs of the flock, till you have schools of your own founding, and under your own direction, that neither yourselves nor the teachers, may be under any restraints from refractory men. If what I have advised, with any improvements, shall be found acceptable, it will give rest and joy to my mind. I have served you almost twenty years. I can only say they are *your* children I want taught, and can assure you it is in my heart to live and die with, and for, both parents and children.

Your Brother, Friend, and Servant, for Christ's sake,
Near Salem, New-Jersey, Sept. 16, 1791.

F. ASBURY.

We will not speak of the 'course of study,' prescribed to all candidates for admission into the itinerant Methodist ministry, and on which they are examined, and required to give satisfaction, previously to their admission into full connexion. Nor will we speak of the standing order of the General Conference for a 'committee on education;'—nor of the able report of that committee drawn up and adopted at the last session of the General Conference, and published by order of that body;—nor of the 'seminaries' which, by the exertions of Methodists, the gentlemen admit are now 'rising in different parts of our land with considerable promise.' They are pleased to insinuate that these modern efforts are produced by the circulation among us of such works as Dr. Adam Clarke's Commentary. If so, then Dr. Clarke's Commentary, were it for this cause alone, ought to be very highly prized, and a hundred fold more widely circulated. The gentlemen themselves do, indeed, declare that, 'after all,' they 'do not object in the least' to the extensive circulation given to it. On the contrary, that they 'only wonder at it,—and wondering, rejoice to see it,' p. 554. But they must excuse us for subjoining, that, if their joy be sincere, they have adopted, we think, a most wonderful mode of showing it. It does not seem to have entered into their thoughts, that, without any change of principle, our enlarged exertions and success in the cause of education latterly, may be, in part at least, the result of increased numbers, and of the consequent increase of both means and wants, together with our ratio of participation in the general impetus which the whole civilized world has felt on the subject of education. From the beginning, Methodists have always esteemed it both a duty and a privilege to take part in every good work, for the glory of God, or the melioration of man; and in coming up, under Christian auspices, to the help of the Lord against the mighty, in the good work of

education, they are acting perfectly in character, and according to their first principles. Were they to do otherwise, they might be much more justly reproached with a shameful dereliction of the principles of their fathers.

What then can the gentlemen mean by charging us with decrying learning? They have themselves, though unwittingly perhaps, furnished a clue, which affords the best apology that we can conceive of for their extraordinary mistake. In immediate connexion with this charge they add, (and distinguish the addition with italics,) 'and *man-made ministers*.' Aye;—to this count in the indictment we plead guilty:—these we do decry. And we have little doubt that this is the solution of the mystery. Methodists have decried the *substitution* of 'human learning,' in the place of other qualifications which they deem essential to the Gospel minister. They have decried the fixing of certain *standards* of 'human learning' which the Master hath not fixed, as *indispensable* to the Gospel ministry. They have decried the disowning, and contemptuously treating as 'incompetent,' and 'inefficient,' all ministers who do not come up to those *human standards*, although such ministers may be well learned in what God has called them to teach, and although *He* owns and blesses their labours perhaps ten thousand times more than those of some who sit at ease in College chairs and ridicule them. But solid and liberal learning, however deep or wide, such as that of the Wesleys, of Fletcher, of Walsh, of Coke, of Benson, or of Clarke, *in connexion* with the proper personal and sacred qualifications for the Gospel ministry, and with God's holy seal and blessing, they do not decry, and never did decry. On the contrary, they think it greatly desirable, and highly to be honored. Yet, in the wants of the world, and the perishing condition of millions, we should consider it, in fact, as a very great and cruel *sin* absolutely to exclude from the ministry very many who do not possess such high literary qualifications, yet are well qualified in other respects, and may be, and are, eminently instrumental in turning many to righteousness, and shall shine as the stars in the firmament for ever, and ever. This is being wise above what is written, and assuming an authority which the Master never granted. The late *Rev. Joseph Eastburn*, of Philadelphia, an authorized minister of the Presbyterian Church, was an example of such as we mean:—a man who would not only have been an *ornament*, but, what is better, a blessing, to any Christian Church or pulpit. Yet Mr. Eastburn, previously to his admission to the ministry, was, we believe, as the phrase is, an unlearned mechanic. He was, nevertheless, well learned in experimental and practical godliness, and in the Holy Scriptures, and an able and successful minister of the New Testament.

But, from the manner in which the gentlemen speak of 'man-made ministers,' it would seem doubtful whether they believe there are any such, or that there is any occasion to guard against the introduction or the manufacturing of them in this country. If the gentlemen will look into *Dwight's Travels in Germany*, (an interesting work, notwithstanding the faults above noticed,) they will find in his account of the Lutheran Church of Prussia, under the head 'Theological Candidates,' that there may be not only 'man-made,' but devil-made 'ministers,' such as, if '*intellectually* qualified,' are not required even to profess 'belief in revelation.' If there *are* such in Germany, there *may* be danger of such in this country; and Methodists do say, and we hope every true Christian says, from such 'Good Lord deliver us.'

We have purposely, in this article, confined ourselves chiefly to the subject of education and learning, with a view of leaving the gentlemen's 'metaphysical smoke' for a distinct notice, in a future number.

It is with pain that we have now to revert to the source of the philippics against us, which periodically appear in the *Christian Spectator*. In an advertisement in one of the journals of this city, it is stated that the *Christian Spectator* is conducted by officers of Yale College, with the assistance

of officers in many other colleges and theological institutions. We certainly feel not the slightest repugnance to professors of colleges being engaged, so far as their academical duties will admit, in conducting scientific, literary, or critical journals,—such, for example, as that of Professor Silliman, of Yale. Such journals come within the appropriate sphere of their profession, and may be read by persons of all denominations, without finding themselves periodically insulted. Neither do we object to the officers of theological seminaries being engaged in conducting theological journals, combined, if they please, with such miscellaneous disquisitions as they may judge expedient. But, in our poor opinion, there is a manifest impropriety in the officers of such a college as Yale being the conductors of so decidedly sectarian a journal as the *Christian Spectator*, and especially one in which another denomination, one of the most numerous in this country, is periodically assailed, and vilified. As a literary and scientific institution, Yale College has always commanded our high respect, and we sincerely regret the necessity which drives us to this posture of defence against the course which some of its officers think proper to pursue toward our denomination. In such a state of things what Methodist, or friend of Methodists, could subject his son or ward to the degradation of being confined within the walls of an institution where his parents and guardians are thus treated?—and where he must be continually exposed to the insult of finding himself surrounded with the *Christian Spectator*, and with the atmosphere of its creation,—with all the powerful influence which the names of the professors connected with it cannot fail to give it *there*. That professors of colleges may have an abstract right, if they choose, to employ their time in such publications, and to give them the weight of their names, is not what we here dispute. How far such a course may comport with the implied pledge that the officers of such institutions will pursue a course that shall enable the whole public, with equal freedom, to participate in their benefits, it may become others more than it does us, to inquire. That very many Methodists, and friends of Methodists, do send their sons and wards to the various colleges in our land, and by no means confine them to those under our own direction, is a well known fact. The question which has been asked among us hitherto, in selecting a college, has been,—where can we find the best, on the most moderate terms? But those officers of Yale College who conduct the *Christian Spectator* have commenced a course which will compel us to add—and where our principles and feelings will at least not be assailed and outraged? and this question must, and it will be asked: nor can our right to ask it in return, be denied or doubted.—The gentlemen, in short, have condemned themselves to a most ungracious and Sisyphean task; and if the ponderous mass which they are at the pains to roll up against us, in their successive numbers, be found tumbling back upon their own heads, we again remind them, in the language of the orator of antiquity, that those who have arraigned us before the bar of the public, must justly be considered as the cause.

In their number for March, the gentlemen say they have ‘showed that the entire “temporal economy” of Methodism is calculated to render the ministry as independent of the people as possible;’ that ‘the laity have only to obey,’—and that we ‘have not ventured to deny one of [their] material positions.’ If, with the information they have now had, they still ‘stoop’ to reiterate such assertions, it will not be easy to stoop lower. In our number for January, p. 109, we averred that the statement assumed by them, that ‘the bishops and preachers have nearly if not quite the entire control, not only of the spiritual, but also of the temporal concerns of the Church,’ is ‘untrue.’ That their representations of our vast funds and revenues, were an ‘aërial fabric,’—‘a visionary figment,’—‘purely fabled,’—and destitute of even ‘the semblance of reality.’—pp. 111–12. In the same number, which we sent to the gentlemen, we stated that ‘the sober truth is, there

is not a body of ministry in the world more perfectly *dependent* on those whom they serve, than the Methodist itinerant ministry,' p. 58. That the people 'hold over them, and over their wives and children, and all most dear to them, the fearful power of feeding or starving them at discretion,' *Ib.* That the true effective power 'is, in reality, in the hands of the people;—more so, in fact, than in almost any other denomination;—and such a power that the preachers must be mad to provoke its array against them, and more than men to be able to resist it,' p. 60. That the people know that they have this 'complete check,' and that the system never can even be so altered by the ministry, as to put it in their power to oppress the people, or to enforce any regulations which should be generally obnoxious to our members, pp. 60–61. Yet the gentlemen still affirm that we have not ventured to deny one of their material positions! And hundreds will see their statements who will never see ours, and will perhaps consider them as 'drawn from Methodist authorities alone'!

They say they 'deemed it proper to inform the public what sort of a system Methodists propose to establish in the place of those institutions—which have made New-England what it is—.' Nay, 'Methodism' claims a share of the honor of making it what it is; and of rescuing it from that 'Congregational tyranny' under which it formerly groaned, when the arm of the *law* was the sceptre of an 'ecclesiastical aristocracy.' And lustily was it wielded. Persons were taxed, and the scanty chattels even of the poor were seized and sold, to support ministers of whose doctrines and ministry they disapproved. This odious and vexatious system Methodism has contributed to 'subvert.' It moreover allows no saddling of a minister on the people for *life*, so that they are obliged afterward to *buy* him off, if they find him 'incompetent' or 'inefficient.' It does not suffer its ministers even to make a *contract* which shall bind the people, and of which they might afterward repent. It not only does not suffer such contracts for life, but not for a year, nor a day, nor an hour. Its ministers are obliged to rely on the *voluntary contributions* of the people for *daily* sustenance, and if the people choose to withhold even this, Methodism admits of no process, either civil or ecclesiastical, for compelling them to furnish it. Let this be compared with the unblushing declaration that our 'entire "temporal economy" is calculated to render the ministry as independent of the people as possible!' And should the gentlemen even not 'stoop to notice' us again, it will be a favor higher than we had anticipated. If otherwise, however, we trust they will do it in some way more worthy of Christian neighbours, and which may enable us to reciprocate kindlier offices.

NOTE 1. The Editors have presumed it understood that the 'paper' alluded to in our January No., (pp. 55–8,) as forming the basis of certain resolutions of the General Conference, was not delivered as an *official* one. This was distinctly stated in the 'Remarks' appended to our pamphlet edition of the Report of the Committee on Petitions and Memorials. But though that paper was not binding as an official act, yet as it was drawn and delivered by one of the agents of 'reformers,' with the expression of his opinion that it would be concurred in by them if accepted by us, this has been deemed an ample vindication of the Conference against the odium attempted to be cast on it for the adoption of the substance of the paper as the basis of the pacificatory resolutions. This is our position, and it is made the stronger by the fact that the said agent was consulted on the resolutions, with the substance of the paper thus incorporated, previously to their being brought before the Conference, and no objection was made either to the resolutions, or to the use of the paper. The other agent was then in a state of affliction which did not admit of his being consulted; and there were, we believe, but two, strictly commissioned, both of whom were members of the General Conference.

NOTE 2. Since our article on 'Sacred Poetry' was put to press we have ascertained, from a work in our possession, that the author of the hymn entitled 'The God of Abrah'm praise,' was the Rev. Thomas Olivers. We shall notice this hymn, and its author, again hereafter.